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The Buccaneers make their home at AdventHealth Training Center, a training facility and team operations center that opened in 2006 and is located mere blocks from Raymond James Stadium.

Formerly known as One Buccaneer Place, the facility was renamed AdventHealth Training Center in August of 2018 as part of a 10-year naming rights deal.

The 136,320-square-foot complex is complete with every amenity and advancement necessary to operate on the highest level, and is a combination of function, style and space. No effort was spared in its creation, from the towering steel-and-glass football entrance to the meticulously kept practice fields.

AdventHealth Training Center raises the bar in every category of team preparation. Players are able to enjoy an expansive and luxurious locker room, fully outfitted player's lounge, and a separate weight room building brimming with equipment. The team's training center is outfitted with everything necessary to keep players in top condition, from a large rehab area to a hydrotherapy room.

The facility also includes a comfortable team auditorium and player classrooms, press conference studio, media workroom and a modern, bright dining room where players and staff are able to take advantage of healthily prepared meals and snacks.

On the second story, the team's business staff operates, focusing on everything from community impact to accounting to marketing. Coaching offices and the Buccaneers' front office staff are also located on the second floor, overlooking AHTC's three full-sized practice fields.

In addition to the main facility, the new state-of-the-art indoor practice facility was completed prior to the 2017 season. The 100,000-square-foot facility features a full-sized FieldTurf playing surface, has an indoor clearance of 96 feet and seating for up to 3,500 guests. The space is used frequently for walkthroughs, practices, select training camp viewing sessions and several other major events hosted at AdventHealth Training Center over the course of the year. The facility provides players and coaching staff members with the luxury of escaping Florida's extremely hot and humid conditions and avoid missed practices due to inclement weather.

From top to bottom, AdventHealth Training Center is a complete facility that stands as one of the finest in the National Football League.

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2023 Official Team Yearbook

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2022 SEASON IN REVIEW

The team kicked off the season with a 19-3 win over the Dallas Cowboy in Week 1, earning Todd Bowles his first win as head coach in Tampa Bay.

The Buccaneers defense collected five takeaways along with six sacks in a 20-10 victory against the New Orleans Saints in Week 2.

In Week 7, wide receiver Chris Godwin surpassed Kevin House (4,928) for the third-most receiving yards in team history.

Two weeks later, Godwin surpassed Mark Carrier (5,018) to move into second place all-time, trailing only teammate Mike Evans in franchise receiving yards.

Tom Brady added to his historic career in Week 9 when he became the first player in NFL history to amass 100,000 career passing yards between the regular season and postseason.

In the same game, he also became the first player in league history to eclipse 7,500 career regular season completions.

On November 13, the Buccaneers played in and won the NFL's first ever regular season game in Germany, defeating the Seattle Seahawks, 21-16.

The first ever regular season touchdown in Germany came on a 31-yard strike from Tom Brady to Julio Jones.

2022 SEASON IN REVIEW

In Week 12, wide receiver Mike Evans became the first player in team history to record 10,000 career receiving yards for Tampa Bay.

In Week 13, Tampa Bay overcame a 13-point fourth quarter deficit, matching the largest fourth-quarter comeback in regulation in team history. With the win, the Buccaneers swept the season series against the Saints for the first time since 2007.

After brining in 207 receiving yards vs. Carolina in Week 17, Mike Evans extended his own NFL record with his ninth-consecutive 1,000-yard receiving season to being his career.

Following a Week 17 win against Carolina, the Buccaneers clinched the NFC South title, earning back-to-back division championships for the first time in franchise history.

The season's best starting lineup

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TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

2023 SCHEDULE

PRESEASON 1 AUG.11 7:00 WFLA	PRESEASON 2 AUG.19 7:30 WFLA	PRESEASON 3 AUG.26 7:00 WFLA
WEEK 1 SEP.10 1:00 CBS	WEEK 2 SEP.17 1:00 FOX	WEEK 3 SEP.25 7:15 ABC
WEEK 4 OCT.1 1:00 FOX	WEEK 5 BYE WEEK	WEEK 6 OCT.15 1:00 FOX
WEEK 7 OCT.22 1:00 FOX	WEEK 8 OCT.26 8:15 PRIME VIDEO	WEEK 9 NOV.5 1:00 CBS
WEEK 10 NOV.12 1:00 CBS	WEEK 11 NOV.19 4:05 FOX	WEEK 12 NOV.26 1:00 CBS
WEEK 13 DEC.3 1:00 CBS	WEEK 14 DEC.10 1:00 CBS	WEEK 15 DEC.17 1:00 FOX
WEEK 16 DEC.24 4:05 CBS	WEEK 17 DEC.31 1:00 FOX	WEEK 18 TBA TBA

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OWNERSHIP

OWNER/CO-CHAIRMAN

BRYAN GLAZER

Owner/Co-Chairman Bryan Glazer enters his 29th year with the Buccaneers, working tirelessly to support the Buccaneers franchise and brand. Possessing an acute business sense, Glazer oversees many of the day-to-day operations of the club and has shaped the Buccaneers into one of the most recognizable and successful franchises in the National Football League. Over the past quarter-century, he has also evolved into one of Tampa Bay's top community leaders through his dedicated commitment to a variety of philanthropic endeavors.

The Glazer family's signing of six-time Super Bowl champion Tom Brady, along with the acquisition of other high-profile free agents during the 2020 offseason, set the stage for the franchise's historic run to its second world championship. The Buccaneers finished the regular season with an 11-5 record and posted a franchise-record eight-game winning streak which culminated with an appearance and eventual victory in Super Bowl LV.

On February 7, 2020, the Buccaneers defeated the Kansas City Chiefs 31-9 at Raymond James Stadium, earning the distinction as the first team in NFL history to win a Super Bowl in its home stadium. Under the Glazer family's leadership, the Buccaneers have totaled six division titles, two conference championships, and are just the 14th NFL franchise to win multiple Super Bowls. In the nearly three decades since the family's purchase of the team in 1995, only three other ownership groups have claimed multiple Super Bowl victories. Prior to the Glazer family's ownership, the team advanced to the postseason just three times from 1976-94.

On January 26, 2003, in just their eighth year of ownership, the Glazer family was on hand in San Diego, California for the franchise's first world championship as Tampa Bay claimed its first NFL title with a 48-21 victory over Oakland in Super Bowl XXXVII. The Buccaneers, who were making their first appearance in the NFL's championship game, also claimed the first-ever NFC South title in 2002, then the fourth division crown in team history. In addition to the 1999 NFC Central Division title, Tampa Bay has also won the NFC South in 2005, 2007, 2021 and 2022.

An instrumental figure in his family's purchase of the Buccaneers in 1995, Glazer has been a driving force in improving every aspect of the club's influence, both nationally and in the Tampa Bay region.

His dedication to the Bay area was also highlighted by his leadership in the construction of Raymond James Stadium, which successfully hosted Super Bowl XXXV in 2001, Super Bowl XLIII in 2009, and Super Bowl LV in 2020. Glazer played an integral role in helping to lure the 2009 game to Tampa Bay, speaking to NFL owners on behalf of the team and the community at the NFL League meetings in May 2005. During the 2017 offseason, Glazer once again played a major part in positioning Tampa Bay as the top option to host Super Bowl LV in 2021, when it was decided that Los Angeles would not be able to meet the criteria for hosting the game due to stadium construction delays. Tampa Bay has hosted three Super Bowls since the family's purchase of the team and Glazer remains committed to pursuing future Super Bowls for the area. Glazer also serves on the NFL's Media Owned and Operated Committee, as appointed by NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell.

Prior to the 2022 season, Glazer played a pivotal role in the decision to name Todd Bowles as the team's new head coach following the retirement of Bruce Arians last offseason. Bowles then led the Buccaneers to a second consecutive NFC South title, becoming only the second head coach in franchise history to guide the team to a playoff appearance in his first season.

Glazer's innovative approach to business and penchant for thinking outside the box has resulted in many new developments for the club, including the creation of the Pewter Partners program, which rewards the Buccaneers' corporate partners with superior advertising packages and unprecedented customer service.

Glazer has also distinguished himself as one of Tampa Bay's top philanthropists and, in the spring of 2016, was honored with induction into the Tampa Bay Business Hall of Fame in recognition of his business achievements and community leadership in and around the region.

In 2010, the Glazer Children's Museum opened in downtown Tampa thanks in large part to a $5 million donation from the Glazer Family Foundation. Glazer is on the Board of Directors for the award-winning museum which has served the children of Tampa Bay through educational programming. Glazer is also a member of the Moffitt Cancer Center National Board of Advisors and has served as chairman of the American Heart Association's annual Heart Ball.

He also serves as a Board Member for the Glazer Vision Foundation which has performed more than 200,000 free eye screenings and provided more than 20,000 free prescription eyeglasses to children in need.

Glazer has also played a large role in the redevelopment of West Tampa through a $4 million donation that led to the construction of the Shanna and Bryan Glazer JCC. The Center, which opened in December of 2016, has provided a wide array of community programming and serves as a key anchor for the area.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Glazer family provided 5 million meals through a donation to Feeding Tampa Bay, which was the largest single donation of meals to the program at the time. The family also pledged $100,000 to the One Tampa: Relief Now, Rise Together Fund and another $100,000 to the City of St. Petersburgh's Fighting Chance Fund.

Glazer also serves on the Board of Manchester United, which has captured five Premier League titles (2007, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2013), as well as the 2008 Champions League title during his tenure.

Glazer earned his bachelor's degree in broadcast communications from American University in 1986, prior to completing his law degree from Whittier College School of Law in 1989. He resides in Tampa with his wife, Shanna, and their two children.

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OWNERSHIP

OWNER/CO-CHAIRMAN

EDWARD GLAZER

Entering his 29th season with Tampa Bay in 2023, Owner/Co-Chairman Edward Glazer oversees many aspects of the team's day-to-day business operations.

Recognizing that the fans are of the utmost importance to the team's success, Glazer sets the tone for Tampa Bay's commitment to its fan base and the experiences created exclusively for Buccaneers Season Pass Members. Glazer introduced the NFL's first 12-month interest-free payment plan and, under his leadership, the Buccaneers once again earned the No. 1 ranking in overall customer satisfaction in 2022 among all 32 NFL clubs. This extended the organization's unprecedented run of top rankings to nine of the last 11 years.

Glazer's dedication to the fans and the team's on-field success was on display during the 2020 offseason when the Buccaneers made one of the most prominent free-agent signings in NFL history with the acquisition of quarterback Tom Brady. The move, along with the additions of several other key free agents, set the stage for the team's historic Super Bowl LV championship just a few months later. Tampa Bay's 31-9 defeat of the Kansas City Chiefs on February 7, 2020, at Raymond James Stadium secured the franchise's second world championship under the Glazer family's leadership and earned the distinction as the NFL's first Super Bowl won by a team on its home field.

The Buccaneers have enjoyed their most successful stretch as a franchise during the nearly three decades of ownership by the Glazer family, including nine playoff appearances, six division titles, two NFC Championships, and victories in Super Bowl XXXVII (2002) and Super Bowl LV (2020).

Glazer also led the design and launch of the Buccaneers new uniforms, which were unveiled prior to the 2020 season. The new look, which features the distinctive style that defined the franchise's most successful era and an all-new pewter look, was inspired by feedback from extensive research of the team's fans.

With a focus on continually improving the gameday experience for Buccaneers fans, Glazer was instrumental in the $160 million, multi-phase renovation of Raymond James Stadium. Glazer's fan-centric approach to enhancing the in-stadium experience has also featured many technology-based improvements as part of the renovation project. As a result, the Buccaneers in-stadium technology experience has consistently been rated among the best in the league with No. 1 rankings in 2017, 2018 and 2021, along with a No.2 showing in 2019, a No. 3 ranking in 2020 and another top five ranking in 2022.

The multi-phase project included the renovation of all main level concession stands along with a variety of technological improvements that featured the installation of over 31,000 square feet of new, state-of-the-art HD video boards, all new ribbon boards, four HD tower video displays in each corner of the stadium and an all-new surround sound system. Additionally, the team completed a comprehensive transformation of all premium areas that included the redesign of all luxury suites, the introduction of two all-inclusive Hall of Fame Clubs and a completely reimagined West Stadium Club. The most recent additions included an all-new 10,000-square-foot retail store, expansion of the Mercedes Hall of Fame Club, a new home team locker room, a redesigned Hyundai Club, and the debut of Bar 76 – a 10,000-square-foot, full-service premium sports bar.

In addition to the stadium renovations, the Glazer family constructed the state-of-the-art indoor practice facility at the team's headquarters. The 100,000 square-foot facility features more than 3,000 seats for fans to enjoy training camp practices and special events.

Prior to the 2019 season, Glazer was part of the process that landed two-time Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year Bruce Arians, who finished his three-year stint in Tampa Bay with the franchise's highest winning percentage by a head coach in team history (.633). Following Arians' transition into a front office role, Glazer was then part of the decision-making process that elevated Todd Bowles from defensive coordinator to head coach ahead of the 2022 NFL season. During his three seasons as defensive coordinator for the Buccaneers (2019-21), Bowles' unit ranked third in the NFL in both takeaways and sacks, in addition to finishing top three in the NFL in rush defense in each of his three seasons. In his first season as head coach, Bowles led the Buccaneers to an NFC South division title, becoming just the second head coach in franchise history to accomplish that feat in his first season.

Away from the football field, the Glazer family has provided Tampa Bay area residents with millions of dollars in funding for programs, tickets, grants, and in-kind contributions. To that end, the Glazer Children's Museum opened in downtown Tampa to rave reviews, earning recognition by Women's Day Magazine and the LA Times as one of the Top 10 children's museums in the country.

During the spring of 2020, as part of an effort to assist the Tampa Bay region during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Glazer family provided 5 million meals through a donation to Feeding Tampa Bay. The Glazers also pledged $100,000 to the One Tampa: Relief Now, Rise Together Fund, and another $100,000 to the City of St. Petersburg's Fighting Chance Fund.

Glazer and his wife, Shari, are committed to providing aid and support to many philanthropic causes thru the Edward and Shari Glazer Charitable Trust. The Trust supports many causes including, but not limited to, the Elton John AIDS Foundation, the Braille Institute, the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), and the Glazer "B.F.F. Bear Program" which gives away thousands of free teddy bears annually to pediatric patients at Cedars-Sinai Hospital, the UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital and Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

In addition to the Buccaneers, Glazer serves on the board of the family-owned Manchester United Soccer Club – the world's most popular sports team with over 660 million fans worldwide. Manchester United has won twenty English titles and has played in five Champions League final matches, winning three times. Manchester United is also a 12-time winner of the FA Cup. Glazer is also the founder and CEO of US Property Trust and US Auto Trust, which owns real estate holdings and auto dealerships throughout the United States.

A proud Ithaca College alumnus, Glazer opened the Edward and Shari Glazer Arena on the school's campus. Shari and Ed have three daughters.

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OWNER/CO-CHAIRMAN

JOEL GLAZER

Owner/Co-Chairman Joel Glazer is entering his 29th season overseeing the day-to-day operations of the franchise, along with other members of the Glazer family.

After working alongside his father Malcolm to successfully acquire the Tampa Bay Buccaneers franchise in 1995, Glazer worked tirelessly in conjunction with his brother, Bryan, to build a community consensus for local approval of what would become Raymond James Stadium. The Glazers set out to design a stadium deemed worthy of a first-class organization, thereby creating a winning environment and revolutionizing fan experience and comfort.

Since assuming his current role with the club, the Buccaneers have made 10 playoff appearances, including a stretch from 1999-2002 in which Tampa Bay was the only team in the league to appear in the postseason all four years. Under the Glazer family's leadership, the Buccaneers have won six division titles, two NFC Championships and two Super Bowls.

Prior to the 2020 season, Glazer helped engineer the boldest free agent signing in franchise history with the acquisition of six-time Super Bowl champion quarterback Tom Brady. The signing, along with the addition of a number of other key players, immediately transformed the Buccaneers into title contenders and set the stage for the team's historic victory in Super Bowl LV. When the Buccaneers defeated the Kansas City Chiefs 31-9 on February 7, 2020, at Raymond James Stadium, it marked the first time in NFL history that a team had won a Super Bowl on its home field. Previous to that, the franchise's other signature historical moment occurred at the conclusion of the 2002 season when Tampa Bay claimed its first NFL title with a 48-21 victory over the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl XXXVII on January 26, 2003, in San Diego. The Buccaneers, who were making their first appearance in the NFL's championship game, also claimed the first-ever NFC South title in 2002, then the fourth division crown in team history. Tampa Bay also took the NFC South in 2005 and 2007.

On January 8, 2019, the Glazer family hired two-time Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year Bruce Arians as the team's head coach. During three memorable seasons at the helm in Tampa Bay, Arians finished his time with the Buccaneers as the franchise leader in winning percentage (.633) by a head coach, surpassing Tony Dungy. After Arians transitioned into a front office role, Glazer was then part of the decision-making process that elevated Todd Bowles from defensive coordinator to head coach ahead of the 2022 NFL season. During his three seasons as defensive coordinator for the Buccaneers (2019-21), Bowles' unit ranked third in the NFL in both takeaways and sacks, in addition to finishing top three in the NFL in rush defense in each of his three seasons. In his first season as head coach, Bowles led the Buccaneers to an NFC South division title, joining Jon Gruden as the only coaches in franchise history to accomplish that feat in year one.

Glazer represents the franchise at all league meetings and is very active in a wide range of NFL matters. He currently serves as Chairman of the NFL International Committee, as well as being a member of the following other NFL committees: Finance Committee, Media Committee, NFL Management Council Executive Committee, and Legalized Sports Betting Committee.

Glazer also played an integral role in helping Tampa host be awarded and host Super Bowl XXXV in 2001, Super Bowl XLIII in 2009 and Super Bowl LV in 2021.

Glazer has been very active in the Tampa Bay community through the Glazer Family Foundation, which is dedicated to helping children in the Tampa Bay area through charity initiatives. The Foundation donated $5 million toward the construction of the Glazer Children's Museum, in downtown Tampa, which opened in 2010 and was named one of the Top Ten Family Museums in the country by Women's Day Magazine. For its wide-reaching charitable efforts, the Tampa Bay Sports Commission named the Glazer Family Foundation the Foundation of the Year at the inaugural Sneaker Soiree held in 2011.

Glazer also serves as Co-Chairman of Manchester United, which has captured five Premier League titles (2007, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2013), one Champions League title (2008), four League Cups (2006, 2009, 2010, 2017), one FA Cup (2016), and one Europa League Championship (2017) during his tenure. His work with the club led to his naming as one of the Top 10 most influential Americans in the United Kingdom by The Telegraph.

Glazer earned his bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies from American University in 1989. The Rochester, New York, native is married to Angela, and the couple has two children.

OWNERSHIP

OWNER/PRESIDENT TAMPA BAY BUCCANEER FOUNDATION AND GLAZER VISION FOUNDATION

DARCIE GLAZER KASSEWITZ

Darcie Glazer Kassewitz has been the driving force behind many of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' innovative, forward-thinking fan engagement. Her leadership has helped position the Tampa Bay Buccaneers at the forefront of driving gender equality and social justice through strategic programming across the greater Tampa Bay region and nationally.

Through her relentless pursuit of creating innovative programming, Kassewitz helped to establish the Social Justice Initiative prior to the 2018 season. The Social Justice Initiative includes monthly events focused on youth empowerment, police relations, criminal justice reform, racial equality and workforce development. The initiative is supported by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Foundation Social Justice Fund, a campaign driven by the team's players and matching contributions from the Glazer family that invests more than $1 million to charitable organizations throughout the region. In recognition of her leadership, Kassewitz was appointed to the NFL's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Aligned with the belief that "football is for all", Kassewitz has implemented initiatives to strengthen the Buccaneers' connection with all segments of their fan base. In 2015, she introduced the Women of Red, a pioneering program focused on enhancing the fan experience for women. In its highly anticipated debut season, Women of Red was deemed "the tipping point for a genuine connection to fans" attracting thousands of women to customized events that offered a wide variety of interactive experiences, exclusive behind-the-scenes access, and opportunities to interact with Buccaneers players and legends as well as current executives. Kassewitz has also positioned the Buccaneers as a leading organization across the NFL among women-focused programs, including a first-of-its-kind Women's Summit for Careers in Football, an NFL-first Girls in Football Scholarship, and the Girls Flag Football Preseason Classic which remains the largest girls flag football tournament in the country. She is also a trustee of the Women's Sports Foundation, a national non-profit organization established in 1974 to enable all girls and women to reach their potential in sports and life.

In support of the organization's long-standing commitment to education in the Tampa Bay community, Kassewitz launched the Jr. Bucs School Program - the single-largest in-school program in team history. Impacting nearly 200,000 students in 300 elementary and middle schools across the Tampa Bay area, these "Bucs Academies" help students on and off the field by providing equipment, expanding the current physical fitness curriculum, and supporting youth literacy in the classroom.

Under Kassewitz's leadership, the Buccaneers provide resources and financial support to important community causes including supporting food banks in partnership with Feeding Tampa Bay and raising awareness and funds towards cancer awareness and patient services benefitting the American Cancer Society, Florida Cancer Specialists Foundation, the AdventHealth Foundation of Central Florida and Moffitt Cancer Center.

Kassewitz also leads the Glazer Vision Foundation, which is committed to full-treatment vision correction for children in Tampa Bay. For over a decade, the Foundation has provided the Mobile Vision Clinic, which provides eye exams and prescription glasses to children in need. Since its inception, the program has performed more than 100,000 free eye screenings and provided more than 20,000 free prescription eyeglasses to children and families.

Through a lead gift, the Foundation has provided the funding necessary to open the world-class Glazer Children's Museum in downtown Tampa as part of its ongoing dedication to children and families. The one-of-a-kind museum opened on September 25, 2010, and instantly became the featured destination for children and families in Tampa Bay, providing 53,000-square feet of space for safe and playful learning.

Since 1999, the foundation has hosted more than 20,000 children at Raymond James through the Buccaneers Gameday for Education program which rewards participating students for academic achievement.

Kassewitz's design expertise has also inspired many of the signature spaces enjoyed by Buccaneers fans and players at the team's business headquarters and training facility. In partnership with her brothers, she spearheaded the design and construction of the AdventHealth Training Center which features in-depth exhibits that tell the story of the franchise and includes a display with the team's two Lombardi trophies as well as a one-of-its-kind sculpture titled "The Moment of Victory" which depicts the moment the team won its first World Championship in Super Bowl XXXVII. Additionally, she was instrumental in the planning and design of the Buccaneers' 100,000-square-foot indoor practice facility which debuted in 2018.

In addition to her responsibilities with the foundation and the Buccaneers' charitable endeavors, she has served as Co-Chairwoman of the Make-A-Wish Foundation in Palm Beach. Kassewitz also serves on the Board of Manchester United Soccer Club, which has captured six titles since the Glazer family took over the club: five Premier League titles (2007, 2008, 2009 and 2011 and 2013), as well as the 2008 Champions League title.

Kassewitz graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from American University in 1990 and earned her Juris Doctorate from Suffolk Law School in 1993. Kassewitz and her husband, Joel, reside in Tampa.

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FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL MANAGER

JASON LICHT

Jason Licht was named the fifth general manager in franchise history on January 21, 2014. Licht owns more than two decades of scouting and player personnel experience with six organizations. In 27 NFL seasons, including one as a coach, the clubs that Licht has worked for have amassed a 231-206 (.529) record, 12 playoff appearances, 10 division championships, five conference championships and two Super Bowl titles.

This offseason, Licht was tasked with navigating a complicated salary cap situation and finding a successor to Tom Brady following the quarterback's retirement, all while retooling a roster in search of its third consecutive NFC South division title. Through a series of extensions for inside linebacker Lavonte David, cornerback Jamel Dean and outside linebacker Anthony Nelson, plus value free agent signings in quarterback Baker Mayfield, defensive lineman Greg Gaines, safety Ryan Neal, guard Matt Feiler, running back Chase Edmonds and kicker Chase McLaughlin, Licht was able to successfully address team needs while abiding by league cap restrictions.

Tampa Bay's 2022 season saw the Buccaneers earn their second consecutive NFC South division title, marking the first time in franchise history that the organization has garnered back-to-back division championships. The 2022 campaign signaled the final season of Tom Brady's career, concluding a three-year span with Tampa Bay that saw him lead the Buccaneers to 32 regular season wins, five postseason wins, two division titles and one Super Bowl Championship after he was signed by Licht as a free agent during the 2020 offseason. Brady finished his time in Tampa Bay as the organization's all-time leader in passer rating (98.1) and completion percentage (66.7%), while ranking second in passing touchdowns (108), pass completions (1,376) and yards per attempt (7.10), and third in pass attempts (2,062) and passing yards (14,643). The 2022 season also saw 2020 draftee Tristan Wirfs named to his second Pro Bowl, while garnering second-team All-Pro honors.

Licht navigated the 2022 offseason swiftly despite the retirement announcement of two offensive mainstays in tight end Rob Gronkowski and guard Ali Marpet. The first move came in March when the Buccaneers announced a trade with the New England Patriots for guard Shaq Mason. Following the trade came several re-signings of foundational pieces Licht either drafted or acquired through free agency. Pro Bowl center Ryan Jensen was the first to re-sign with the team, followed by cornerback Carlton Davis III and running back Leonard Fournette. Licht also secured one of the league's best wide receivers when he reached a multi-year extension with his 2017 third-round pick Chris Godwin. Wide receiver Russell Gage signed in March, while Licht added veteran defensive lineman Akiem Hicks in June.

In 2021, quarterback Tom Brady helped lead the Buccaneers to a 13-4 record while recording the best statistical season of his 22-year career, leading the league in both yards (5,316) and touchdowns (43). Brady was protected by three Pro Bowlers in center Ryan Jensen, guard Ali Marpet, and tackle Tristan Wirfs. The trio combined for 3,369 snaps and only allowed five sacks. Adding to the No. 1-ranked passing offense, Mike Evans set a career-high in touchdown catches (14), finishing second in the NFL. Evans' historic year was highlighted by an eighth consecutive 1,000-yard receiving season.

Defensively, Licht constructed a unit with Pro Bowlers at every level, with Shaquil Barrett receiving his second selection as a Buccaneer and Vita Vea, Devin White, and Antoine Winfield Jr. all receiving their first honor. In his third season, White led the team in total tackles (128) and tied for 10th in the NFL in solo tackles (87). Winfield Jr. led the league in fumble recoveries with three. Before wrapping up the regular season, Licht signed Vea to a contract extension, rewarding the nose tackle who bolstered the Buccaneers run defense to a top-three finish each of the last three seasons.

During the 2021 offseason, Licht led the effort to retain all 22 starters from the Buccaneers' Super Bowl LV championship team, the first reigning champion to accomplish this feat in the salary cap era. This led to a franchise-record 13 regular-season wins and two home playoff games, including a Divisional Round appearance. Nine of those 22 starters were named to the Pro Bowl, tying a franchise record.

In 2020, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers defeated the Kansas City Chiefs, 31-9, at Raymond James Stadium in Super Bowl LV. Twelve of Tampa Bay's 22 starters in the Super Bowl were drafted by Licht, including all five members of the team's starting defensive backfield. All but two of the players on the team's championship roster were acquired by Licht. Brady, the game's most valuable player, was the most notable of many key acquisitions Licht made last offseason, propelling the Buccaneers to the second championship in franchise history.

In the 2020 regular season, Brady helped guide the team to an 11-5 record, while setting the franchise single-season touchdown pass record, with 40. Brady also oversaw an offense that established franchise records for points scored (492) and total touchdowns (59).

Of the team's 14 postseason touchdowns, nine were scored by players acquired by Licht during the 2019 offseason, including all four touchdowns scored in Super Bowl LV. On the defensive side of the ball, outside linebackers Shaquil Barrett and Jason Pierre-Paul have formed one of the league's most dominant pass-rushing duos, combining for the second-most sacks (45.5) by any NFL teammates from 2019-20. Heading into the 2021 season Barrett (0.89) and Pierre-Paul (0.73) ranked first and third, respectively, in franchise history for sacks per game.

Entering the 2020 season, Licht was able to make significant changes to the roster, despite offseason challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Licht spearheaded the Buccaneers' first-ever virtual draft by selecting seven players, including offensive tackle Tristan Wirfs at No. 13 overall. Wirfs was selected to the PFWA All-Rookie Team in 2020 alongside second-round pick Antoine Winfield Jr. The Buccaneers were the only team in the NFL to have multiple draft picks selected to the All-Rookie Team in consecutive seasons from 2019-20. Licht was able to keep the defensive front seven together by placing the franchise tag on outside linebacker Shaquil Barrett and re-signing defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh and outside linebacker Jason Pierre-Paul. Pierre-Paul went on to earn a Pro Bowl selection in 2020. The most significant change came in March after signing six-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback Tom Brady in free agency and conducting a trade with New England to bring five-time Pro Bowl tight end Rob Gronkowski out of retirement.

The 2020 season saw Evans – Licht's first ever draft selection as general manager – record more than 1,000 receiving yards, becoming the first player in NFL history to do so in each of their first seven seasons. In 2019, Evans' fellow receiver Chris Godwin posted his first career 1,000-yard season and earned AP's Second-Team All-Pro honors. The duo became the first pair of receivers voted to the Pro Bowl since Arizona's Larry Fitzgerald and Anquan Boldin in 2009.

On the defensive side of the ball in 2019, outside linebacker Shaquil Barrett was named Second Team All-Pro and earned a Pro Bowl selection after setting a franchise record for single-season sacks with 19.5. Linebacker Devin White – the fifth overall pick in the 2019 NFL draft – was named Defensive Rookie of the Month in both November and December, in addition to making the PFWA All-Rookie Team alongside cornerback Sean Murphy-Bunting. Rookie cornerback Jamel Dean recorded 17 passes defensed, tied for the fourth-most in the NFL, while second-year cornerback Carlton Davis recorded 19 passes defensed, the second-most in the NFL.

During the 2019 offseason, Licht made a handful of changes to the team's defense, most notably adding free agent defensive lineman Ndamukong Suh, a five-time All-Pro and Pro Bowl selection. Suh – alongside 2018 first-round draft pick Vita Vea – helped anchor a Buccaneers defensive line that held opponents to Licht also brought in outside linebacker Shaquil Barrett while spending the team's

first five draft picks on the defensive side of the ball, including linebacker Devin White, selected with the fifth overall pick. In 2018, White was named the Butkus Award winner as the best linebacker in college football.

In 2019 offseason, Licht signed left tackle Donovan Smith to a contract extension, after having done the same with left guard Ali Marpet during the 2018 season. Marpet (61st overall) and Smith (34th overall) entered the league as second-round picks in the 2015 NFL Draft. Since the start of the 2015 season, they have been part of an offense that has recorded the third-most yards per game in the NFL (380.5), second-most passing yards per game (278.5) and fourth-highest yards per play (5.82) during that span, while ranking third in third-down conversion rate (43.2 pct.).

In 2018, Mike Evans ranked third in the NFL in receiving yards and set a franchise single season record (1,524) one the way to earning his second career Pro Bowl selection. Prior to the 2018 season, Evans was rewarded with a contract extension.

In the 2018 offseason, Licht transformed the team's defensive line with the addition of Jason Pierre-Paul, Carl Nassib and Vita Vea. Pierre-Paul went on to lead the team in sacks with 12.5 – then the most by any Buccaneers player since 2005 (Simeon Rice, 14.0). Acquired through waivers from Cleveland, Nassib finished the season ranked second on the team in sacks, with 6.5. Vea, whom Licht selected with the 12th overall pick in the 2018 NFL Draft, finished the season strong, ranking second among defensive linemen in tackles over the final six weeks.

In the 2017 NFL Draft, Licht selected six players, with three stepping into starting roles as rookies. The Buccaneers' first-round pick, tight end O.J. Howard, started all 14 games he played in, tying for the team lead with six touchdown receptions – tied for the second-most among NFL rookies and the fourth-most ever by a Buccaneers rookie. Howard had 565 receiving yards and five touchdowns in 10 games in 2018, before missing the final six weeks due to injury.

The Buccaneers also got contributions from wide receiver Chris Godwin, a third-round pick who started the final two games on the season and earned NFC Offensive Player of the Week honors in Week 17 after catching seven passes for 111 yards, including a game-winning 39-yard touchdown. In 2018, Godwin stepped into a more featured role, catching 59 passes for 842 yards and seven touchdowns, prior to his breakout season in 2019.

The Buccaneers finished the 2016 season at 9-7. Mike Evans earned his first career Pro Bowl selection after finishing the year with 96 catches for 1,321 yards and 12 touchdowns. His 12 touchdown catches tied his own franchise record (set in 2014) and were tied for the second-most in the NFL in 2016. His 96 catches were the second-most in Buccaneers history and the sixth-most in the league that season, while his 1,321 yards were then the third-most ever by a Buccaneers player and ranked fourth in the NFL.

Another major contributor to the team's offense was tight end Cameron Brate, who originally joined the team as a college free agent out of Harvard in 2014. After only playing in five games as a rookie, Brate has since become an integral part of the Buccaneers' offense, catching 26 touchdowns since the start of the 2016 season, tied for the fourth-most in the NFL among tight ends during that timeframe. His 29 career touchdown receptions are fourth-most in franchise history. Brate's production was rewarded with a contract extension during the 2018 offseason.

In 2015, Licht drafted quarterback Jameis Winston with the No. 1 overall pick. During Winston's five seasons with the team, he set franchise records for pass attempts (2,548), completions (1,563), passing yards (19,737) and passing touchdowns (121).

Licht joined the Buccaneers in 2014, on the heels of two seasons with Arizona as the vice president of player personnel, working under general manager Steve Keim, who earned NFL Executive of the Year honors from both Pro Football Talk and Sporting News. Licht's first draft pick with Tampa Bay, wide receiver Mike Evans, was selected seventh overall in the 2014 NFL Draft and went on to have a stellar rookie season, finishing with 68 receptions for 1,051 yards and 12 touchdowns and being named to the PFWA, NFL.com, ESPN.com and SI.com All-Rookie Teams.

Licht first worked for the Cardinals in 2008 as a personnel executive, before leaving to spend three seasons as director of pro personnel with New England. He returned to Arizona in 2012 as director of player personnel before being promoted to the vice president position.

In addition, Licht's career has intersected with some of the NFL's greatest head coaches, including Don Shula, Jimmy Johnson, Bill Belichick and Andy Reid. In all, Licht has worked alongside seven head coaches who have led a team to a Super Bowl (Shula, Johnson, Belichick, Reid, Pete Carroll, Lovie Smith, Ken Whisenhunt) and seven who have won AP Coach of the Year honors in their careers (Shula, Johnson, Belichick, Reid, Smith, Dom Capers and Bruce Arians).

While with Arizona, Licht worked directly with the head coach and general manager on player acquisition and contract negotiations, as well as leading the club's scouting efforts as he oversaw both the college and pro scouting departments. The 2013 season saw the Cardinals improve to 10-6 from a 5-11 campaign the previous year.

In 2008 Arizona won the NFC West and advanced to the Super Bowl. Licht then spent three seasons (2009-11) as director of pro personnel with the New England Patriots, where he was responsible for monitoring every NFL roster with an emphasis on scouting talent of upcoming pro free agents, while also maintaining depth on New England's roster. The Patriots were AFC East champions in each of those three seasons and advanced to the Super Bowl following the 2011 campaign.

Licht spent five years with the Philadelphia Eagles (2003-07), first serving as the club's assistant director of player personnel before being promoted to vice president of player personnel for his final two seasons. The team won three NFC East titles during that span and earned a berth in Super Bowl XXXIX.

Prior to joining Philadelphia, Licht enjoyed his first stint in New England, serving as a scout and assistant director of player personnel from 1999-2002, a stretch that included a victory in Super Bowl XXXVI. He was part of a front office that drafted core pieces of the team that won three Super Bowls in four seasons, such as Damien Woody, Kevin Faulk, Tom Brady, Richard Seymour, Matt Light, and Deion Branch.

Licht began his NFL career with the Miami Dolphins in 1995, where he worked as a scouting department assistant before spending the 1996 season as an offensive assistant/quality control coach. In 1997, he worked for National Football Scouting, a college football scouting service, before joining the Carolina Panthers' scouting staff in 1998.

Licht played linebacker and guard at the University of Nebraska from 1989-91 before transferring to Nebraska-Wesleyan, where he was an all-conference defensive tackle. He and his wife, Blair, have three children: Charlie, Zoe and Theo.

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COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH

TODD BOWLES

Todd Bowles enters his second season as head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers following his three seasons as the team's defensive coordinator (2019-21).

Bowles led the Buccaneers to an NFC South title in his first year as the head coach in Tampa Bay, joining Jon Gruden as the only coaches in franchise history to accomplish that feat in year one. He was the play caller for a defense that finished top 10 in the NFL in total yards per game (324.3 opponent yards/game), yards per play (5.14 avg.), pass defense (203.5 passing yards allowed/game), net yards per attempt (6.1), sacks (45.0) and tackles for loss (89), while limiting opponents to the fifth-fewest first downs per game (18.5) and the sixth-lowest third down conversion percentage (36.9 percent).

On the other side of the ball, Tristan Wirfs made his second Pro Bowl as part of an offensive line unit that led the league in fewest sacks allowed/pass attempt (2.8%). In addition, Tampa Bay ranked second in the NFL in passing offense (279.8 yards/game) and boasted a pair of 1,000-yard receivers in Mike Evans and Chris Godwin. Godwin finished eighth in the NFL with his 104 receptions – the second-most in a single season in Buccaneers franchise history.

In his three seasons as defensive coordinator from 2019-2021, he transformed the unit into one of the most productive, opportunistic defenses in the NFL. Tampa Bay ranked third in the league in takeaways (82) and third in sacks (142), joining the Pittsburgh Steelers as the only teams to place in the top five of both categories. In addition to the sacks and takeaways under Bowles' guidance as defensive coordinator, the Buccaneers ranked first in rushing yards allowed per game (82.5), first in rushing yards per attempt (3.72), first in quarterback hits (352), first in defensive fumble recoveries (37), first in passes defensed (241), second in strip sacks (26), third in tackles for loss (262), fourth in forced fumbles (52), tied for fourth in defensive touchdowns (nine), fifth in fewest yards per play allowed (5.13), fifth in passing yards per attempt allowed (6.78), sixth in red zone defense efficiency (54.7%), seventh in lowest third-down conversion rate allowed (37.6%), ninth in total defense (334.1 yards allowed per game) and ninth in goal-to-go efficiency (68.6%).

From 2020-21, the Buccaneers allowed the sixth-fewest points per game (21.5) and the fifth-fewest yards per game (329.4). In six postseason contests during that span, Tampa Bay tallied 16 takeaways – seven more than any other team. Bowles was the architect behind a historic defensive performance that catapulted the Buccaneers to a Super Bowl LV victory. His unit held the explosive Kansas City Chiefs' offense to nine points and without a touchdown for the first time in 54 games with Patrick Mahomes as the starting quarterback.

In 2021 alone, Bowles led a defense that finished first in the NFL in quarterback hits (123), third in rush defense (92.5 ypg), fifth in fewest points per game allowed (20.8), tied for fifth in takeaways (29), seventh in sacks (47.0), seventh in fewest yards per play allowed (5.16), eighth in tackles for loss (81), tied for eighth in interceptions (17) and tied for eighth in forced fumbles (16). Four Buccaneers defensive players earned Pro Bowl honors in 2021: outside linebacker Shaquil Barrett, nose tackle Vita Vea, linebacker Devin White and safety Antoine Winfield Jr. – the most in a single season on the defensive side of the ball since 2002.

In Tampa Bay's championship season in 2020, Bowles directed a defense that led the NFL in quarterback hits (142), tackles for loss (107) and takeaways (34), while tying for the league lead in sacks (58.0) between the regular season and postseason combined. During the regular season alone, the Buccaneers' defense ranked first in rushing yards allowed per game (80.6), tied for second in quarterback hits (116), tied for second in tackles for loss (91), tied for fourth in sacks (48.0), sixth in total yards allowed per game (327.1) and eighth in points allowed per game (22.2). Additionally, the Buccaneers defense allowed the fifth-fewest first downs (19.9) and tallied the seventh-most sacks per pass attempt (7.78%).

In just his first two seasons, Bowles helped elevate a Buccaneers defense that ranked 27th in the NFL in yards per game allowed prior to his arrival to a team that finished sixth in that category in 2020. In the Super Bowl, Tampa Bay held the Kansas City Chiefs to just nine points – keeping a team that ranked sixth during the regular season in touchdowns out of the end zone. The nine points given up by the Buccaneers tied for the 10th-fewest in Super Bowl history.

Bowles helped mentor Winfield Jr. into PFWA All-Rookie team honors and coached outside linebacker Jason Pierre-Paul to his third career Pro Bowl selection.

In his first season in Tampa Bay in 2019, Bowles quickly put an emphasis on stopping the run as he transformed the Buccaneers from the 24th-ranked run defense in 2018 (123.9 rush yards allowed per game) to the top run defense in the NFL in 2019, holding opponents to just 73.8 rushing yards per game and just 3.26 average yards per rush. The 1,181 rushing yards allowed by Tampa Bay in 2019 were the 11th-fewest all-time in a 16-game season. The front seven showed a knack for getting into the opposing backfield, tying for fifth in the NFL in tackles for loss.

The Buccaneers also led the NFL with 96 passes defensed in 2019, tied for the league lead with six defensive touchdowns, ranked third with 21 forced fumbles and finished fifth with 28 takeaways.

In the secondary, Bowles guided a group of predominantly first and second-year players to a notable second-half turnaround in which the defense reduced its passing yards allowed per game from 293.5 in Games 1-8 to 246.8 in Games 9-16, while lowering its total yards allowed per game mark from 371.6 to 316.3 in that same span. The 316.3 total yards allowed per game was the sixth-best mark of any defense over its final eight games of the season.

Bowles' 2019 defense featured three players who took home end-of-season honors, led by Pro Bowl and AP second-team All-Pro outside linebacker Shaquil Barrett. Barrett set a team record with his league-leading 19.5 sacks in 2019, breaking Pro Football Hall of Famer Warren Sapp's team record of 16.5 set in 2000. The defense also featured two AP All-Rookie Team members: Sean Murphy-Bunting and Devin White. White led all rookies with 7.0 tackles per game and Sean Murphy-Bunting tied for the most interceptions by a rookie with three.

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COACHING STAFF

Bowles joined the Buccaneers after spending the previous four seasons as the head coach of the New York Jets (2015-18). Under Bowles, the Jets posted one of the best run defenses in the NFL, holding teams to just 4.00 yards per carry, the sixth-lowest figure in the NFL during that span, and allowing only 44 rushing touchdowns, tied for the eighth-least in that timeframe. Bowles' Jets defense also allowed opposing offenses to convert only 36.0 percent of third downs, the fourth-lowest mark in the league. Opposing passers completed just 60.6 percent of their passes against the Jets under Bowles, the third-lowest mark in the NFL.

Four different defensive players earned Pro Bowl berths under Bowles in New York, with cornerback Darrelle Revis and defensive lineman Muhammad Wilkerson being selected in 2015, defensive lineman Leonard Williams being nominated in 2016 and safety Jamal Adams voted to the game in 2018. The 2018 season also saw Jets return specialist Andre Roberts earn Pro Bowl distinction, along with being named first-team AP All-Pro as a kick returner.

Prior to serving as the head coach of the Jets, Bowles spent two seasons as the defensive coordinator of the Arizona Cardinals (2013-14), including winning Assistant Coach of the Year honors from the Pro Football Writers of America and the Associated Press in 2014. During Bowles' time in Arizona, the Cardinals' defense allowed the third-fewest rushing touchdowns (14), the fifth-fewest points per game (19.5) and the fifth-fewest rushing yards per game (96.6). Bowles' defenses in Arizona also showed a knack for taking the ball away, recording the fifth-most interceptions in the NFL (38) and the most defensive touchdowns in the league, with nine.

While Bowles led the Cardinals' defense, he saw cornerback Patrick Peterson earn first-team AP All-Pro honors in 2013 and earn Pro Bowl honors both years (2013-14). Defensive end John Abraham (2013), cornerback Antonio Cromartie (2014) and defensive end Calais Campbell (2014) each also earned Pro Bowl selections.

Bowles spent one year with the Philadelphia Eagles (2012), serving as the team's secondary coach before being named interim defensive coordinator for the final 10 games of the season. Philadelphia finished ninth in passing yards allowed (216.9 per game) that season.

Before joining the Eagles, Bowles worked as the assistant head coach/secondary coach for the Miami Dolphins for four seasons (2008-11). In the 2011 season, he was named interim head coach for the final three games of the year, going 2-1. Under Bowles' tutelage, Miami's secondary held opposing quarterbacks to a 58.1 completion percentage over that span, the seventh-lowest mark in the NFL.

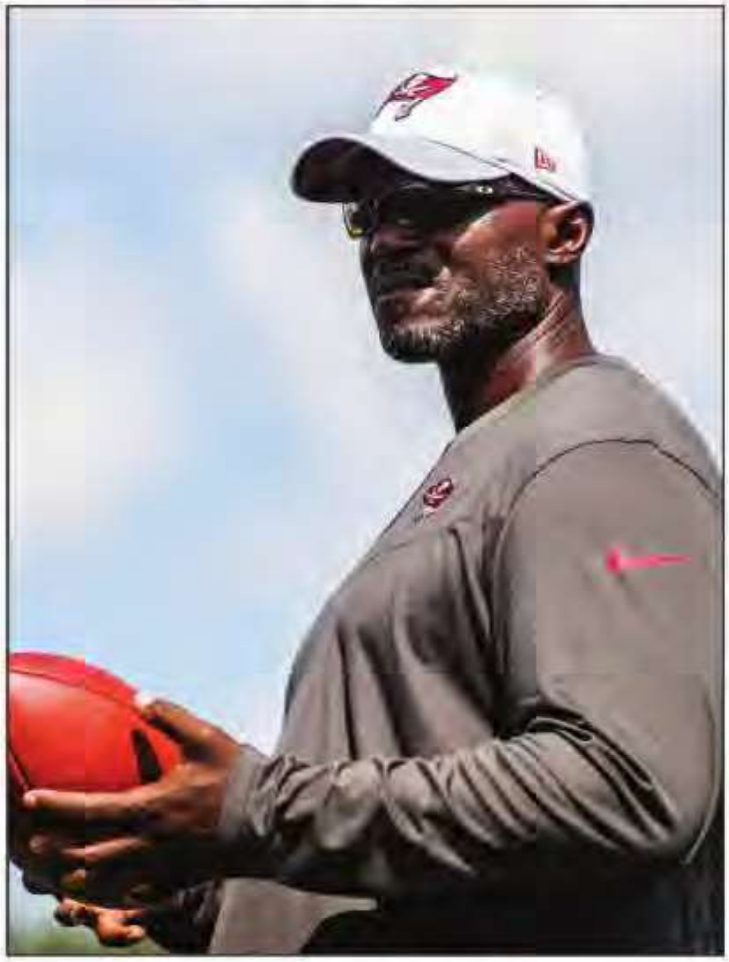
Prior to his time in Miami, Bowles worked as the defensive backs coach for the Dallas Cowboys (2005-07), coaching three different players to the Pro Bowl (safety Ken Hamlin, cornerback Terence Newman and safety Roy Williams).

His NFL coaching career began in 2000 as the defensive backs coach of the New York Jets, coaching a unit that allowed just 18.3 passing yards per game, the sixth-lowest in the NFL. Following his season in New York, Bowles spent four years with the Cleveland Browns, working as the team's defensive nickel package coach (2001-03) and secondary coach (2004). In 2001, the team set a franchise record with 33 interceptions and in 2004, the Browns allowed the fifth-fewest passing yards in the NFL (181.3 per game).

Before coaching in the NFL, Bowles spent one season as the defensive coordinator at Morehouse College (1997) and two seasons as the defensive coordinator at Grambling State (1998-99).

Bowles played collegiately at Temple and, despite going undrafted in the 1986 NFL Draft, played eight years in the NFL, with the Washington Redskins (1986-90; 1992-93) and the San Francisco 49ers (1991). He was a starter on the 1987 Redskins team that won Super Bowl XXII. Following his retirement as a player, Bowles spent two seasons (1995-96) with the Green Bay Packers player personnel department.

A native of New Jersey, Bowles and his wife, Taneka, have three sons, Todd Jr., Troy and Tyson. Todd Jr. currently plays collegiate football at Rutgers, while Troy will begin his collegiate football career at Georgia in 2023. The Bowles family is actively involved in the Tampa Bay community supporting organizations including Autism Speaks, The Spring of Tampa Bay, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Foundation.



BOWLES AT A GLANCE

YEARS	POSITION
1982-85	Temple, Player
1986-90	Washington Redskins, Player
1991	San Francisco 49ers, Player
1992-93	Washington Redskins, Player
1995-96	Green Bay Packers, College Scouting Assistant
1997	Morehouse College, Defensive Coordinator/Secondary
1998-99	Grambling State, Defensive Coordinator/Defensive Backs
2000	New York Jets, Defensive Backs
2001-03	Cleveland Browns, Defensive Nickel Package
2004	Cleveland Browns, Secondary
2005-07	Dallas Cowboys, Defensive Backs
2008-11	Miami Dolphins, Assistant Head Coach/Secondary
2011	Miami Dolphins, Interim Head Coach
2012	Philadelphia Eagles, Secondary/Interim Defensive Coordinator
2013-14	Arizona Cardinals, Defensive Coordinator
2015-18	New York Jets, Head Coach
2019-21	**Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Defensive Coordinator**
2022-	**Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Head Coach**

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BLESSING IN DISGUISE

HONORING AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH WITH THE BOWLES FAMILY

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER: AN AUTISM TESTIMONY

By Brianna Dix

Todd and Taneka Bowles share their faith journey from diagnosis to acceptance in celebration of their autistic son, Tyson.

What comes to mind when you think of the word autism?

For many, it is deficiency, disorder, impediment. These are limiting generalizations that have become synonymous with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), shaping a narrowed worldview. The public understanding of autism, a lifelong neurological difference of varying severity that affects social interaction and communication, is often built on stereotypes. No two people on the spectrum are alike, yet atypical individuals are placed under a stigma with a preconceived list of symptoms. Because those on the spectrum do not comply to a "cultural norm," they are pushed to the edge of society and subject to discrimination. Autism is not a problem to be solved or a deficiency to be treated, but a difference to be valued and accepted. ASD is not the antagonist; intolerance and ignorance are.

"The more knowledgeable people are about autism, the more it will start to change," Buccaneers Head Coach Todd Bowles reflected as he swiveled in his chair. "Most people think it is a physical disease and it is not; It is more mental than it is physical. Some get stuck and are probably four or five years behind mentally where they should be, but I do not think enough people are educated among that and understand what autism is. I think Rain Man became the closest to it so to speak, in its own way, but there are people who have physical problems. For others, it is just mental. It is a different ability, and you learn how to adapt to that ability."

For Todd Bowles and his wife, Taneka, the gravity of the word autism became reality in 2013, knocking their family life off its axis. Their son, Tyson, was not responding as expected at two years old. He did not make eye contact nor speak, which led to an audiologist appointment. Once the audiologist confirmed his ears were working properly, a meeting with a pediatrician followed suit. After certain milestone boxes were not checked, Todd and Taneka ventured to a pediatric neurologist with Tyson. There, the developmental question marks were given a name: autism. Tyson was officially diagnosed, prompting disillusionment. In that moment, a contrived tragedy dispelled aspirations of who their son could be.

"Tyson had the blessing of oblivion," Taneka recalled. "He did not understand what I was being told but I understood that there was a lot of weight with this. This was something that was going to be a part of and if not, reshape all of our lives. So, in that moment, I am just going to be honest, I was depressed. I decided that I was going to shut the world out and I was going to live in a bubble, and it would just be us, with me and Tyson forever, because that felt like a safe place. There was the ignorance of me not really understanding what it was and me basing autism on a person who I saw that was nonverbal at 20 years old that could not function - the worst-case scenario."

A few months later, another change occurred. This one physically uprooted the Bowles family to a new destination. Todd, who had served as the interim defensive coordinator and secondary coach for the Philadelphia Eagles, was let go. What could have been a breaking point for the Bowles family turned into a faith-based perspective shift. The move not only led to a new address, but a new frame of mind amidst the confusion. In the transition, Todd and Taneka let go of the fight and

suppressed thoughts over what the mind rigidly envisioned would be. They embraced an uncertain reality, courageously pushing forward.

"Really, we got blessed to be fired three months later," Taneka assessed. "So, we were really only in Philly for eight months. We got there, got the diagnosis and were out of there three months later. So, I spent those last three months in the house being depressed. Watching every movie made and trying to say to myself, 'The doctor was wrong.' Anything, but the right thing. But we got fired and I am blessed that God changed our geography. In that, it changed my mindset. You know, you are in a different environment, and you are open now. I had to go look for houses and I had to go look for schools for Tyson. I had to make sure I found a therapist and moving to Arizona was probably one of the best things that happened. Once we got there and I put him into a daycare center that was inclusive, Tyson had the best teacher.

"Vernetta Madsen did not specialize in kids with disabilities, she just had a big heart. But that is all it takes sometimes, especially when they are that young and there is not a huge academic component to nursery school. So, he felt the love from his peers, and he felt the love from that lady. He still was nonverbal, but I just wanted him to start getting social cues to be around other people. I knew that sitting in the house every day for the rest of his life being depressed could not be the plan. He really thrived there but I did not have him on a huge therapy plan. That period was just me learning to get our feet wet and letting him be gone for half the day."

That newfound outlook paved the way for the tumultuous journey ahead, with each day bringing a task of its own. Sixteen months later, another obstacle arrived. After serving as the defensive coordinator for the Arizona Cardinals for two seasons, Todd took a head coaching role with the New York Jets, switching to the AFC East. The coaching gig landed the Bowles' family in the hub of autism research around the globe, optimizing growth. There, in a functional environment that catered to Tyson's learning style, an unexpected miracle happened. On an unassuming day during a parent-teacher conference, light pierced through darkness. Time stood still and through tear-streaked faces, hope abounded.

"The New York/New Jersey area is the epicenter for autism research and development in the nation," Taneka stated. "People actually move from Europe to North Jersey because they have the best schools, they have the best research, they have the best studies, they have the best everything and it all fell into our lap. So, he gets to this learning center called The Uncommon Thread (TUT). I decided it was getting to the point where it was time for him to get ready for school. So instead of sending him to daycare, I was sending him to a learning center for autism. So, at Uncommon Thread, it is all about connections. These therapists are trying to build relationships because once they trust you, they will be willing to try new things. Tyson still was not talking. Todd and I went to a parent-teacher conference, and it wasn't the typical parent-teacher conference. It is when you sit there with the director of the learning center, and you watch your kid on a monitor in their regular therapy sessions. Tyson was talking and we had no idea! We got to hear our son's voice for the first time, and I cannot even verbalize to you what that moment meant for both of us. Because there was an ability there. Once we saw that part was possible, I pushed Tyson so hard after that.

"His first words were animals. It wasn't mom, it wasn't dad, it wasn't any of that. So, funny enough, Todd goes back to work, and I get Tyson in the car. Normally, I did not try to hold a conversation with him because I know it was frustrating for him not to be able to talk and the last thing you want to do is try and force someone to do something they are not capable of. But then, it was like, 'Now I know you can talk.' So, I said, 'Oh my goodness, what is that?' He said, 'Bird.' We were not talking but I could hear his voice. So, anything we watched, I would say, 'What is that?' He would say, 'Elephant.' I would say, 'Elephants are big.' Can you say, 'Big?' Then he would say, 'Big.' So, we had to start as if he was one year old. Over the years, he just blossomed. We just kept adding new dimensions into his life and once he trusted, he would add new things."

The seemingly insurmountable feat became possible. Tyson's speech sparked determination. With every word he spoke, Tyson shattered the prejudged parameters that were placed on him due to the diagnosis.

Bird
Tree
Giraffe
Tall
Elephant
Big

"From where he came to where he is at, you would never believe it," Todd smiled. "He learns it differently, so you have to teach it differently. He does not get the normal conversation borders, but he understands. He is the nicest kid in the world, and you just have to make sure that no one takes advantage of him. He can be too kind to a fault sometimes and it is just a process every day."

For every 'no' that the Bowles family received from countless doctors, they created a maybe, if not a yes for their son. After taking significant strides forward in New York within the epicenter for autism, another move ensued which landed the Bowles' family in Tampa, Florida. This time, they were determined to create a personalized environment for Tyson, one to cultivate learning. Taneka sent Danielle Tracy Ethier, Tyson's BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst), to Tampa for a week to scout out the school system and landscape in relation to autism. After hitting a dead end, Todd and Taneka decided to enroll Tyson at a private Christian school, West Gate Christian School. There, they could custom-tailor Tyson's day to complement his unique sensory processing. Taneka hired a paraprofessional, Wendy Johnson, to be his advocate on a daily basis at West Gate. She currently works alongside Tyson's teachers to translate information for Tyson with an understanding of sensitivity to sensory input, taking neurodiversity into account so he can work alongside his peers. Now, Tyson operates in an environment customized by his speech therapist, his behaviorist and occupational therapist, which has helped enhance his cognitive receptivity. He may operate at a different pace but is able to be his most authentic self, breaking the one-size-fits-all confinement.

"Our road has not always been easy but thank God we have always had our village surrounding us whether it is family or friends or therapists or teachers or anything," Taneka stressed. "They [West Gate] have allowed us to customize but this is an anomaly. This never gets to happen for the average kid on the spectrum, so we are blessed. What has happened here in Tampa that did not happen in New York is, he is like everybody's best friend. Tyson has become so popular now because he is the kid who does not judge. He is the kid who just wants to have fun and is the kid who also does not realize there is something different about him. He thinks there is something wrong with all of us, which I think is great."

As the Bowles see it, Tyson does not feel sorry for himself so why should anyone else? They know he has as much to offer the world as any other person. Because those with autism do not fit into a stereotypical box, they risk being bullied and labeled as impaired, often deprived of contributions. However, differences – including variations to the human brain – are what make the world spectacular. Value should not be placed on uniformity but on originality.

"WE PUT A POSITIVE SPIN ON IT AND NOW HE WEARS AUTISM LIKE A SUPERMAN CAPE. HE TURNS HIS LIMITS INTO LEMONADE ALL THE TIME."

"It may sound strange, but I do not know if I would want Tyson any other way," Taneka stated. "He is so unique, and he is so special, and he is so motivated and so genuine, and that innocence is still there – I love that about him. We had to sit Tyson down and tell him about autism. It was one of those, When and how do you do it? How did we want to present autism to him? We do not want to put a negative spin on it so we said, 'Tyson, there is something that is different about you than other people and we explained to him and asked him questions to see if he could verbalize how he felt when he couldn't talk and he said, 'Angry. I was angry a lot. I was mad.' So, we went back to, 'This is what that is called. The reason why you couldn't communicate for so long was because of this one word, but you are talking now and walking (because he didn't walk until he was three), and you are doing so great with this one thing. It is something that is always going to be in your heart and something that is always going to be a part of you, but it is also something that makes you special in other ways.' We framed it as, 'Why would you want it to be gone because this is why you do this so well and that so well.' We put a positive spin on it and now he wears autism like a Superman cape. He turns his limits into

lemonade all the time. The main thing we prioritized was telling him that, 'As long as you maintain your relationship with God, He is the one that is making sure you can get through this. He is the reason why you can talk now.'"

Growing up, Tyson has formed an incomparable bond with his father, Todd. To him, the stoic man who wears the headset on the sideline is simply, "dad." The inseparable duo has a routine that mimics the classic 1993 movie, Groundhog Day. Every morning like clockwork, Tyson calls Todd on his way to school. In the evenings, the besties sit on the couch together watching a myriad of shows: Friends, NCIS, Two and a Half Men and sports. The pair are Joey and Chandler on the Barcalounger personified, eating dinner on TV trays until it is time to get ready for bed. Then bursting with laughter, Tyson and Todd brush their teeth together. On Friday's, when Todd is able to leave work early, he takes Tyson for a special treat - fries and a milkshake at McDonald's.

During the Bucs' up-and-down season on the gridiron in 2022, Tyson made it his mission to cheer up daddy on the car ride following home games at Raymond James Stadium. He was the ray of sunshine that would not allow anyone to be sad after a loss. Tyson always beamed with pride no matter the score and manifested positivity, forcing his parents to do the same. Tyson became a blessing in disguise and like always, brightened the room by his contagious presence.

"I have heard people say that if you want to see the 'nice' Coach Bowles, you go to him around 7:20 a.m. because that is when he has just had his morning conversation with Tyson," Taneka exclaimed. "So, if he is really digging into somebody and his phone rings, it's 'Oh, hey man how's it going?' And when he gets off the phone, there is the softest side of Todd - it doesn't last very long - but there is that part of the morning. From the time Todd gets home from work until they go to bed, Tyson is selfish enough to believe that time all belongs to him. That is his best friend in so many ways and I love to see that relationship, because we were told what everybody was told: 'Your kid is not going to be social. They are not going to make eye contact.'

"None of us would be who we are without him. God made him for us. We feel that way and we know it. Todd even says it, he knows he wouldn't be the person he is if he wasn't Tyson's dad. We get things like this happen because God has a calling on us and has a higher purpose for us and we are here to serve that first and foremost. He has two older brothers [Todd Bowles Jr. and Troy Bowles] who love him so much. They take so much time with him and if he wants to go to the mall with them, he can go. If he wants to go to the movies with them, he can. They let him hang out and all their friends like him so much because he really is a cool kid."

Despite living in a world that tried to make a predetermined conclusion of what he can and cannot excel at, Tyson continues to defy the odds stacked against him. He is the antithesis of the autism stigma. Science only goes so far, and then comes God. Tyson breaks barriers and silences preconceptions about neurodiversity. He continues to take "can't" out of the vocabulary in connection to his ASD.

Tyson can speak.
Tyson is patient.
Tyson is athletic.
Tyson is a social butterfly.
Tyson has mental focus.
Tyson has a sense of humor.

"I think most people when they hear it, they think it is a physical disease and it's not," Todd assessed. "It is more mental than it is physical. They learn differently but they are just as smart, if not smarter. Tyson makes a lot of videos of things that he sees. I do not know how he does it. He has patience because it is very time consuming. He will grab our cellphones, set up and act out each character and put the movie together. It is incredible - I couldn't do that in a billion years. He is really sharp and when you think he doesn't hear you, he hears you. He understands a lot more

and you just hope it keeps getting better. I just do not think there is enough awareness on it because it is not immediately life or death, that you kind of overblow it."

Tyson is a passionate videographer. He makes flipagrams, creating short films through editing, effects, and voice-overs. Sometimes, the videos take up to a week to complete as Tyson makes between 200-300 stills. He is a self-taught overachiever and will watch one of his favorite cartoon episodes, then memorize it. Tyson has a photographic memory which allows him to recall the lines at a quicker rate than the average person. Then using figurines, Tyson moves them inch by inch and shot by shot, precisely positioning the characters to construct the flipagram. Then, he produces the loop-over and voice overs for every character, re-shooting the film over and over and over until the finished product is designed to his delightful specifications. Videography is not only Tyson's niche, but also relaxation therapy.

Hardships and fears persist but Tyson continues to make monumental strides every year. One involves his ability to manage frustration. He is now better equipped to express himself emotionally, and his once frequent lash-outs happen less often. Tyson has the self-awareness to realize when he is about to get "stuck," and instead of letting the overload fester, he can voice how he wants to react when the frustration creeps in.

"I will tell you: I have cried," Taneka explained. "Sometimes when he is trying to work on his flipagram and he is trying to be creative, he will get stuck and not realize he is getting stuck. He will walk into the living room, and he has the glassy eyes, and he goes and sits on Todd's lap, because Todd is the one now that has the back rub, the conversation: 'I don't want you to cry. We can do this in a different way. Tell me if you are angry, tell me if you are mad and talk about it.' He gets so frustrated and will come down and say, 'Mommy, I'm stuck.' So, I say, 'What are we going to do? Are we going to cry it out or talk it out?' He will go sit with Todd or call Todd on the phone, or he wants to cry it out, but the fact that he understands that it is happening is huge. Because, before he didn't know what was going on. Back then, it would happen more often than not because he couldn't talk. He fights through it."

The other eclipsed milestone is Tyson no longer bolts from safety. Autism itself does not affect life expectancy, however research shows that the mortality risk among individuals on the spectrum is twice as high as the general population, in large part due to drownings and other accidents among children. Darting is an instinctive sudden flight phenomenon and an involuntary response to a trigger. The reaction could be running a red light, running into traffic, falling into a body of water, falling off a high

location, or getting lost. The issue regarding the prevalent "inappropriate" or "maladaptive behavior" narrative, is that it comes from external and non-affected individuals. Hypersensitivity or an overload of stimuli can lead to darting as a coping mechanism for those with autism. The pulling urge that used to orient Tyson and cause him to wander, is gone.

"The average lifespan of individuals with autism is their mid-30's and it is not because they die of a disease, it is because the data is skewed because so many kids drown in pools and get hit by cars when they are young," Taneka described. "There was a long time where I wouldn't let him go places and do things - 'No we are not going to the beach,' or 'No we are not doing that,' because I figured if I lessened the probability, then it would lessen the possibility. If we did not have this well-oiled machine, I would be fear-central, panic mode all of the time. Tyson escapes a lot, and this is the first house we have had where the doors are not deadbolted. If Tyson wanted to go, he would just go. In every subdivision, he knows where the playground is, and I would be cooking dinner and look at the front door and it is wide open, and he is gone. That is one of the reasons we had to move out of one of the subdivisions we were living in South Tampa because it was across the street from the playground and more often than not, he was disappearing. So, we started locking up the doors but then he started getting tall enough to see us put the key away and he knew where it was. We lived in fear enough that we bolted all exterior doors to the house for years until last year. This is the first house we have not done that because whatever was triggering him is not happening anymore. I can go to the store and call him on the phone, and he will stay in the house - that is a huge quantum leap for us."

As Tyson grows, he approaches a harsh yet inevitable reality: adulthood. Research currently suggests that 66% of young adults on the spectrum are unemployed and are not engaged in higher education two years-post high school. Planning for future employment should be part of the fabric of every child's plan. Adults with autism are represented in every profession. Tyson deserves the same access to education, the workforce and support, with recognition of remarkable skills, neurovariance and sensory processing. There is more advocacy centered around the child stages of ASD, but less investigated services are being spent on transitions to postsecondary education, employment and community efforts for autistic adults.

"The world is not ready for the demographic and the legislation is not even there to protect these grownups," Taneka said. "It is not being given the attention it deserves at the grownup level. I think people are wrapping their head around kids on the spectrum but after you age out of the school system, what do you do then? Is that as far as we think they can go? They have talents and I really wish people could meet some of these people and see that it does not all look the same - there are not two people in the world alike in general. Nobody is prepared to deal with his idiosyncrasies because they do not see it. I want people to think before they react or say something negative because this person may be on the spectrum. You're going to have more people with autism than blue eyes in a minute so it might make more sense to take a step back and say, 'This could be that.' Also, the that isn't clearly explained."

"Some do not take these people seriously," Todd emphasized. "There are a lot of dorms opening up. I know Clemson opened one up and I think Alabama is opening up one. They are putting these kids in college, so I think that is a start. I do not know where the cure ends but it is a start. We will just have to keep talking to people, educating and make them aware because if some of these grownups go out on their own, they might see someone acting 'crazy' and not know why."

Todd and Taneka Bowles have turned their focus to the adult autism community because that is where Tyson is headed. Tyson is 12-years-old now and runs track, going to speed, agility and conditioning training three times a week. He is undergoing a trial-and-error process to see which sports usurp the others in his internal hierarchy. As he carries out his athletic endeavors, mom and dad have amplified their voices through sponsorship of an autism awareness resale boutique in Tampa Bay. They are utilizing their platform to pay it forward, shining a light on societal insufficiencies. The Autism Acceptance Center employs teenagers and adults on the spectrum, with proceeds going to an autism day-training program for adults online at a learning center. Todd and Taneka have made it their mission to become catalysts for change in the community, working to de-stigmatize ASD. They are advocating for more than accommodations. They are truly advocating for Tyson and someone on the spectrum's quality of life.

Instead of viewing autism as a crutch, the Bowles' family makes a conscious decision to see it as a gift. Tyson Andrew Bowles is not defined by his diagnosis. He is not a failed neurotypical person but is instead the embodiment of kindness that the world desperately needs more of. There is not a better child hiding behind the autism-label. Tyson is the sensational person God created. There must be a paradigm shift in the way that autism is viewed. Many, like Tyson, should not have to mask their authentic selves to align with the comfort of others. Tyson does not suffer from the condition; he suffers from the detrimental conjectures that are associated with ASD. Choose inclusiveness. Autism is not a choice, but acceptance is.

To a parent whose child has just been diagnosed with autism, a letter from Head Coach Todd Bowles and his wife, Taneka:

Todd: "This does not mean that your child is strange. Stay with him because your child is going to get to know you and you are going to get to know them. They are going to be normal. Stick with them and do not give up on them. They will be fine as long as you love them and show them that love."

Taneka: "It is not your fault. There is no cause. There is no cure. There is just love and treatment. Focus on that and it will get easier. Do not believe everything you hear when you go to the doctor. What you put into your child's life is what is going to come out. Put 10,000 percent of yourself into them. This is not a burden; it is a blessing. This is going to change you for the better."

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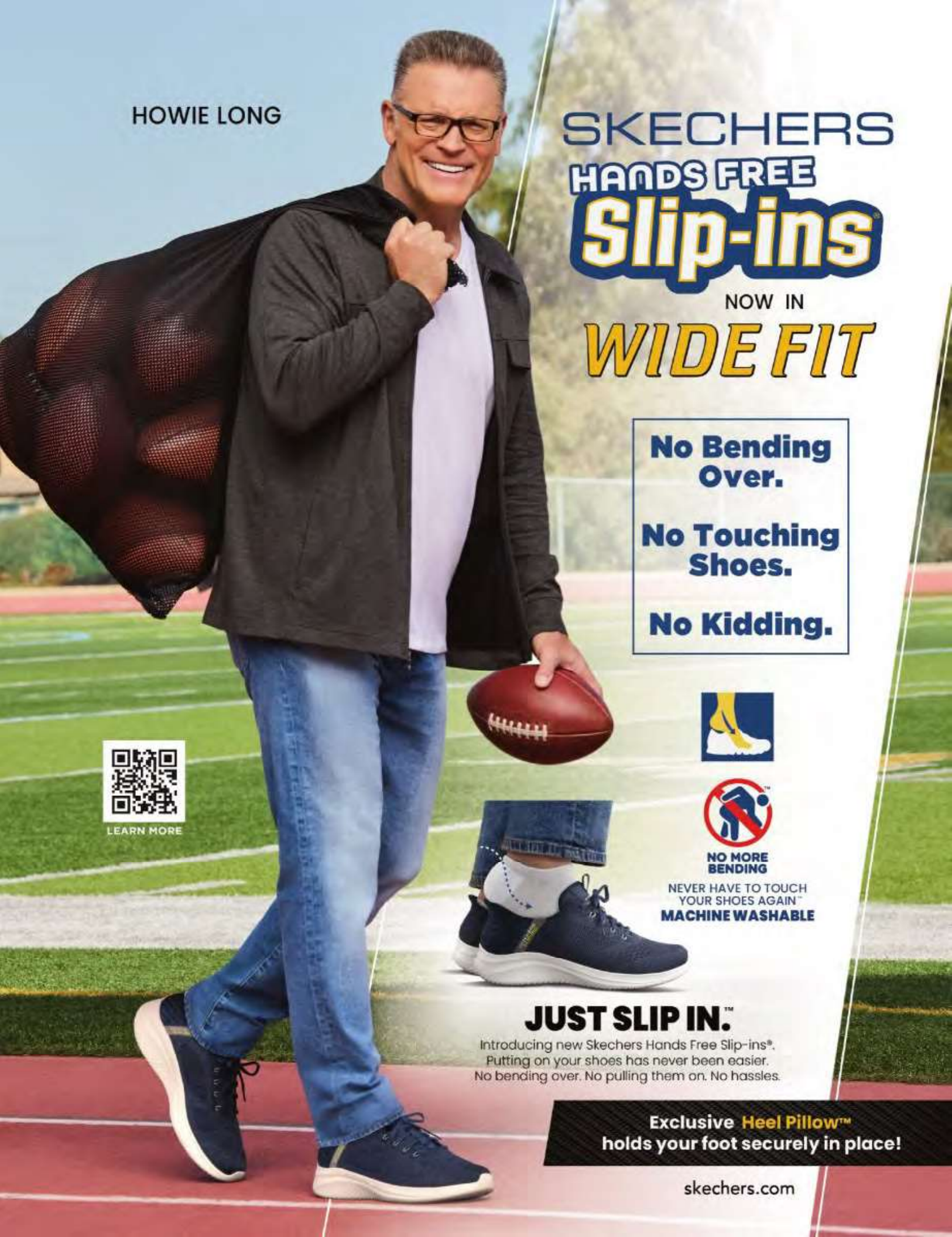
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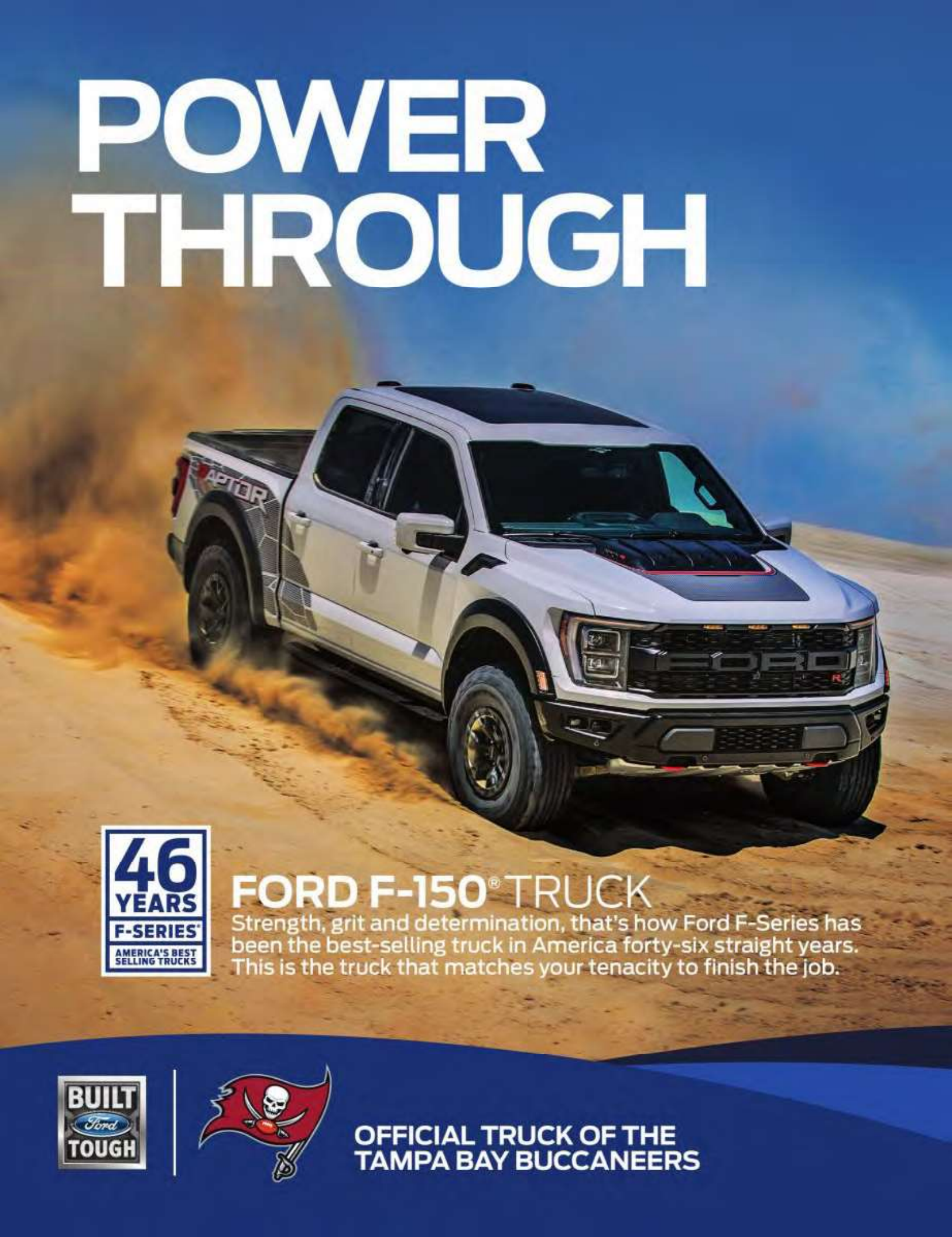

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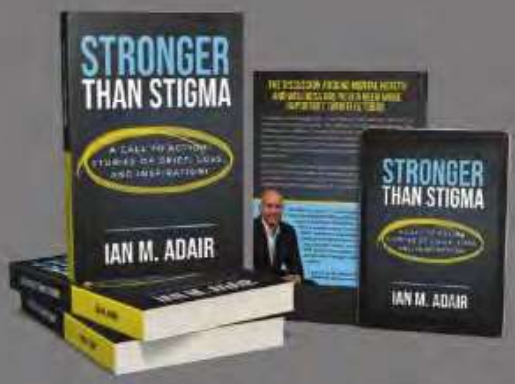

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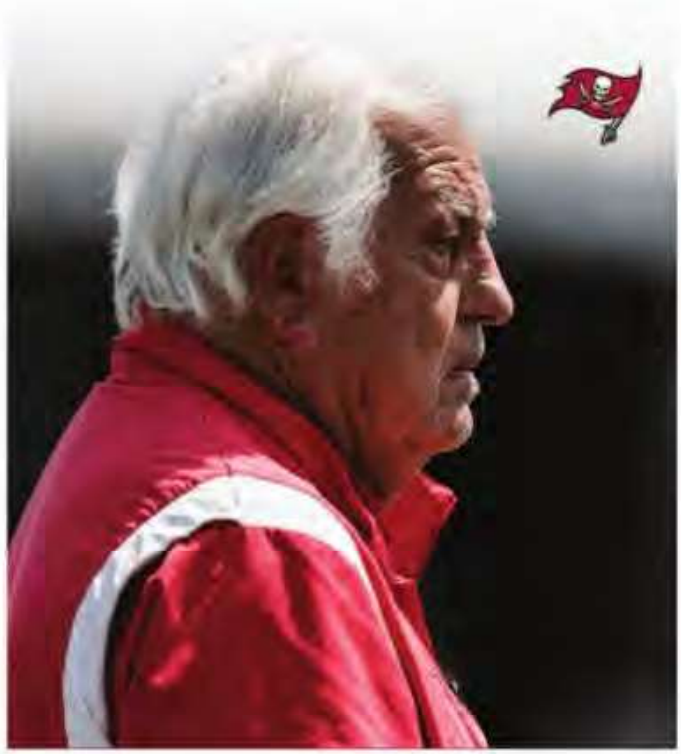
LASTING LEGACY

Tom Moore



TOM MOORE, LEGENDARY OFFENSIVE MIND, HONORED IN CANTON

By Brianna Dix

Tom Moore's insatiable passion for football has burned for more than 60 years, carrying an acclaimed career to its pinnacle: The Hall of Fame Award of Excellence. A reminiscent tour through his unprecedented tenure in the NFL spanning over four decades

Answers.

As the thought-provoking word resonates, Tampa Bay Buccaneers' offensive consultant Tom Moore slowly rises from the wooden desk in his office. He strolls down the hallway lined with nostalgic illustrations of the team's past, returning with four sheets of white paper. The door closes, silencing the noise of distant chatter for a glimpse at history. He holds the papers delicately and places them on the desk, illuminating their worth. On them, are four hand-drawn plays scribbled in pencil. Leaning over my shoulder, Moore recollects. The voice that has echoed across the NFL landscape for 45 years from the sideline, now takes center stage.

"We line up in this formation and if they give us this coverage, which is very popular in the NFL, and close it down with 'Jaguar' - a pass pattern - then that is a touchdown," Moore explained. "Next is a 'Dungy' play. We call it Dungy because it is what we did in Indianapolis. In the 13 years in Indianapolis, we saw that one time and threw a touchdown to beat Cincinnati and never saw it again because that is our answer. Next, people wanted to bring down the strong safety and then roll up Cover Two; well with the SAM strong safety, they have an extra guy. You break that tight end out there and that guy is waiting for him – a hot, blitz control. Well, we had a sixth option. We ran a screen and that was our answer to that.

"I liken it to college. Have you ever been to an exam, and you can hardly wait to get there because you know the teacher cannot ask you a question you cannot answer? That's fun and you sleep well the night before too. But, by the same token, we have gone into an exam and said, 'Wooh man, I hope they don't ask me this question.' Then, you do not sleep well, and you are nervous. You try to get your players to the point where on Sunday they cannot do a single thing that we do not have an answer for."

After finishing his detailed breakdown, Moore sits back down in his chair and swivels to the filing cabinet lining the back wall. The drawer opens, providing a reminiscent gateway to famed NFL annals. He pulls out a sheet of paper and gently guides it to the desk. Printed on the single page are legendary formations: Four game-sealing plays in red and black ink that spearheaded victories in Super Bowls XIII, XIV, XLI and LV, respectively. Each will forever be etched in Moore's subconscious, drawing a devilish grin. Moore's eyes dance as the evocations return. He conjures up one singular play in his mind, reliving the glorious bygone.

January 20, 1980.

60 Prevent Slot Hook & Go was the call in the huddle.

On a third-and-eight from the Pittsburgh 27, John Stallworth ran a hook-and-go pattern. The goal of the route was to go down, fake the hook – hoping the defensive back would bite on it – and then to run deep. Stallworth ran right past the inside defender (who mistakenly took the outside receiver), leaving only the outside defender, Rod Perry, to make the play downfield. Terry Bradshaw threw the football. When Stallworth looked back, instead of the ball coming for the inside shoulder, the trajectory of the ball was soaring for Stallworth's right, outside shoulder. However, as fate would deliver a blessing, that placement allowed the catch to be made. Perry leaped and was about an inch away from deflecting the pass, but Stallworth adjusted and caught it without breaking stride, running untouched into the end zone.

Stallworth's 73-yard touchdown reception off Bradshaw's rocket propelled the Steelers to a fourth-quarter lead and eventual 31-19 victory over the Rams – providing the Steelers with their fourth Super Bowl title in six years. The Pittsburgh staff had put in the wrinkle a week before the Super Bowl specifically engineered for a prevent defense, and the opportune moment came. All season long in 1979, Pittsburgh had run solely a hook and slide off that concept and the reimagined play worked like a charm. When the game of football was transitioning to an aerial circus, Moore and company maximized the talent of Bradshaw and his weapons, allowing them to fly in the late 70s.

"That play right there, it won us the Super Bowl," Moore twinkled. "Terry Bradshaw got to it, and it was John Stallworth who caught it. I credit Lynn Swann for teaching me one of my biggest lessons going into pro football. Lynn came to me and said, 'Stallworth and I can catch the ball. We can play a long time and make a lot of money in this profession, so teach us what we don't know.' I responded, 'What don't you know?' He said, 'We need a lot of help on adjusting routes and a lot of work on reading coverages and a lot of work on beating coverages. Teach us that.' So, that's what I did.

"What you have to do is teach them what to do: meetings, preparation, film, practice, all that stuff. Then you have to teach them how to do it. If you tell a receiver, 'Run a hook route,' well then, it's, 'How would you like me to run that?' Because, if you get man coverage or inside/outside technique, you can get man-press technique, you can get zone and you can get man-rotation or zone-rotation, so 'How do you want me to run it?' If you can teach them how and what to do, then that allows them to play fast. You have to play fast. If you can play faster than the opponent, then eventually you will break his will. Then the defensive back says, 'I can't cover' or, 'We'd better play Cover Two.' You don't want the receiver saying, 'I can't get open,' because then he broke your will. You want to get them into a position where they can break the other guy's will. The only way they can do that is through the proper teaching, fundamentals, and technique."

Moore reclines as thoughts pervade like a hologram projector. It's June at the AdventHealth Training Center and he is approaching a career-defining milestone. The spry 84-year-old is days away from recognition in Canton, Ohio, where he will receive the Hall of Fame Award of Excellence – a program launched by the Pro Football Hall of Fame last year to celebrate significant contributors to the game. Moore will be immortalized for his long-established imprint on the game of football as an assistant coach. He is one of the greatest offensive minds in NFL history, patrolling the sidelines for 45 years. From a corner playground to stadiums basked in the prime-time spotlight, Moore has cemented his legacy as an offensive architect. His illustrious coaching tenure began in 1961 when he started working for his alma mater, the University of Iowa, and it sparked a love affair that has lasted a lifetime.

Moore began playing organized football in the fifth grade in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, which ignited his relentless desire to compete. With a father who was frequently away from the home and a working mother, the coaching staff served as Moore's moral compass, instilling a commitment to education and dedication to hard work. After graduating from Rochester High School, Moore attended the University of Iowa, where he played quarterback. He was part of a team that won a Big-10 title in 1958 – before color TV had been introduced into affluent living rooms across America – and another in 1960. Moore's experience as a signal-caller provided a unique lens into grasping the intricacies of defenses and how to exploit weaknesses.

AP Images

Michael Conroy/2007 AP

That philosophical approach has catapulted him forward. During 1961-62, Moore stayed as a graduate assistant for the Hawkeyes, before serving two years in the Army. The Minnesota native resumed his coaching career at the University of Dayton, where he coached running backs. Moore went on to coach at Wake Forest, Georgia Tech, the University of Minnesota and for the New York Stars of the World Football League (WFL).

"I think I got $100 a month," Moore said on his grad work at Iowa. "Then, I went into the Army because I did ROTC and got my commission. I spent a year in Korea and a year in Georgia. Next, I got my first job at the University of Dayton, making $6,000 a year. That was my salary for the first four years. I got to go to Wake Forest and I made $12,000. Then, I went to Georgia Tech, and I made $15,000 and then Minnesota, I made $18,000. Then, I left for a year and went to the World Football League. It went belly up and I lost every dime I had.

"I had a wife, two kids to support and I was living in New York with no job. I had not been paid for six months. I was broke and I told myself I would wait until March 1st, then I was going to do something else with my life. I went from no job to suddenly having three offers. I made it a day before I decided to quit. Looking back, I have absolutely no regrets. You have to have your priorities of what is important. I have never negotiated a contract. I have never had an agent. I always thought, 'If I cannot get it on my own, then I do not deserve it.'"

That principle serves as Moore's guiding paradigm. His refusal to succumb to bitterness paid dividends. Undeterred, driven by a dream, Moore pushed forward. In 1977, Moore got his big break: The National Football League came calling. Moore joined Chuck Noll's coaching staff in the Iron City, where he initially served as the receivers coach, a position he held for six seasons. That year, nearly 300 players were taken in the NFL Draft, but none by the name of Tony Dungy. As Dungy's coach at Minnesota and an offensive specialist, Moore influenced the storied Steelers to offer Dungy a free agent contract. Upon arrival, Dungy transitioned from quarterback to defensive back. That move fashioned an unbreakable bond between Dungy and Moore, one that would eventually shape an upper echelon team in the NFL.

"I flew into Minneapolis, and we gave Tony Dungy a $2,000 signing bonus and a three-year contract for a little over $14,000," Moore described. "Back then, those guys had to have separate jobs during the season. In that time, we had one, three-day minicamp and that was over memorial weekend so guys could get off work that weekend. Now, it is OTAs and minicamp and Phase One, Phase Two and all that stuff. I am for the players to make as much as they can. I am for the owners to make as much as they can. When I first started at Pittsburgh, we had six assistant coaches and a head coach. That was it. Now, it has grown exponentially."

With Pittsburgh, Moore was part of the Super Bowl XIII and XIV coaching staffs, mentoring players including Hall of Famers Lynn Swann, John Stallworth and Terry Bradshaw. He served as the Steelers' wide receiver coach until 1983 when he was promoted to the club's offensive coordinator role (1983-89). Within a decade, Moore had helped Noll transform a franchise that had been the laughingstock and object of mockery on The Tonight Show into the mecca of the football world. The Steelers came to embody American labor during the 1970s, representing a gritty, blue-collar mentality that still persists.

"I say I am the most fortunate person in the world because I got my start with Pittsburgh and Chuck Noll was so good with the coaches and he brought in college coaches and he trained them how to teach and what he wanted taught," Moore said. "So, I was fortunate there. That is what Chuck was, he was a great teacher. On the first day of practice for the 13 years I was in Pittsburgh, we spent an hour teaching everybody on the team how to block and tackle by the numbers. He was very influential."

Following 13 seasons in Pittsburgh, Moore spent time with eight teams serving in various offensive roles. Moore served as a receivers coach in Minnesota during the 1992-1993 seasons under Jerry Burns and Dennis Green before he headed to Detroit. He spent three seasons as the Lions' offensive coordinator, leading a unit boasting Hall of Fame running back Barry Sanders and star pass-catcher Herman Moore. The team led the NFL in total offense in 1995 under Moore's tutelage, becoming the first team in league history to have two receivers eclipse 100 catches in a single season (Herman Moore and Brett Perriman).

After his stint in Detroit, Moore spent a season with the New Orleans Saints as the running backs coach, then landed with the Indianapolis Colts. He spent a decade on Dungy's coaching staff, running an offense led by Hall of Famers Peyton Manning, Edgerrin James, Marvin Harrison and household name Reggie Wayne. Moore led the Colts to a Super Bowl XLI win over the Chicago Bears. He oversaw the development of Manning, molding him into one of the greatest quarterbacks in NFL history. Manning won four MVPs with Moore in his ear, as the wizard drove him to reach unimagined heights. Moore and Manning were a brilliant tandem from 1998 – when the Colts selected Manning with the No. 1 overall pick – until 2010. They took the NFL by storm during that stretch, engineering the league's

unquestioned offensive onslaught: No. 1 in points (26.1 per game), passing yards (261.9) and passing touchdowns (407). The trio of Manning, James and Harrison helped the Colts achieve five division titles from 1990-05, establishing Indianapolis atop the hierarchy in the league. Only two teams in NFL history have produced a 4,000-yard passer, a 1,500-yard rusher and a 1,500-yard receiver in the same season. Those franchises were the 1995 Detroit Lions and the 1999 Indianapolis Colts - both led by Moore. Stop after stop in his career trajectory, Moore manifested success from the shadows, cultivating growth among the players he instructed.

"I think of Peyton Manning's first pass in the preseason game and very few people throw slants into Cover Two, but the way Tom set it up, it was a 54-yard touchdown to Marvin Harrison off a simple slant-pattern," laughed Bruce Arians, an NFL executive and former head coach. "Just little things like that showed how intelligent he is. He lined receivers up on the edge of the numbers so that the quarterback would see if the defensive back was standing inside of him or the outside of him. It was simple in nature but also complex in delivery. When I was the head coach, he was the guy I leaned on all the time with his experience. You always want to have that guy around who has been there, done it and that is going to tell you the truth and not just what you want to hear.

"His contributions offensively, he is one of the brightest minds to have ever coached in the game. For him, it is a matter of putting a lot on the quarterback and putting teams in the right play at the line of scrimmage. For years, he had a run-pass audible that most teams did not have yet. Then, the quarterback would get up there and use a cadence and get the defense to show what they were going to do, then attack it. Especially in the run game, when you give the offensive line the best opportunity to be successful and put them in the right play, that does not put a lot on the quarterback. His quarterbacks have always been able to handle it."

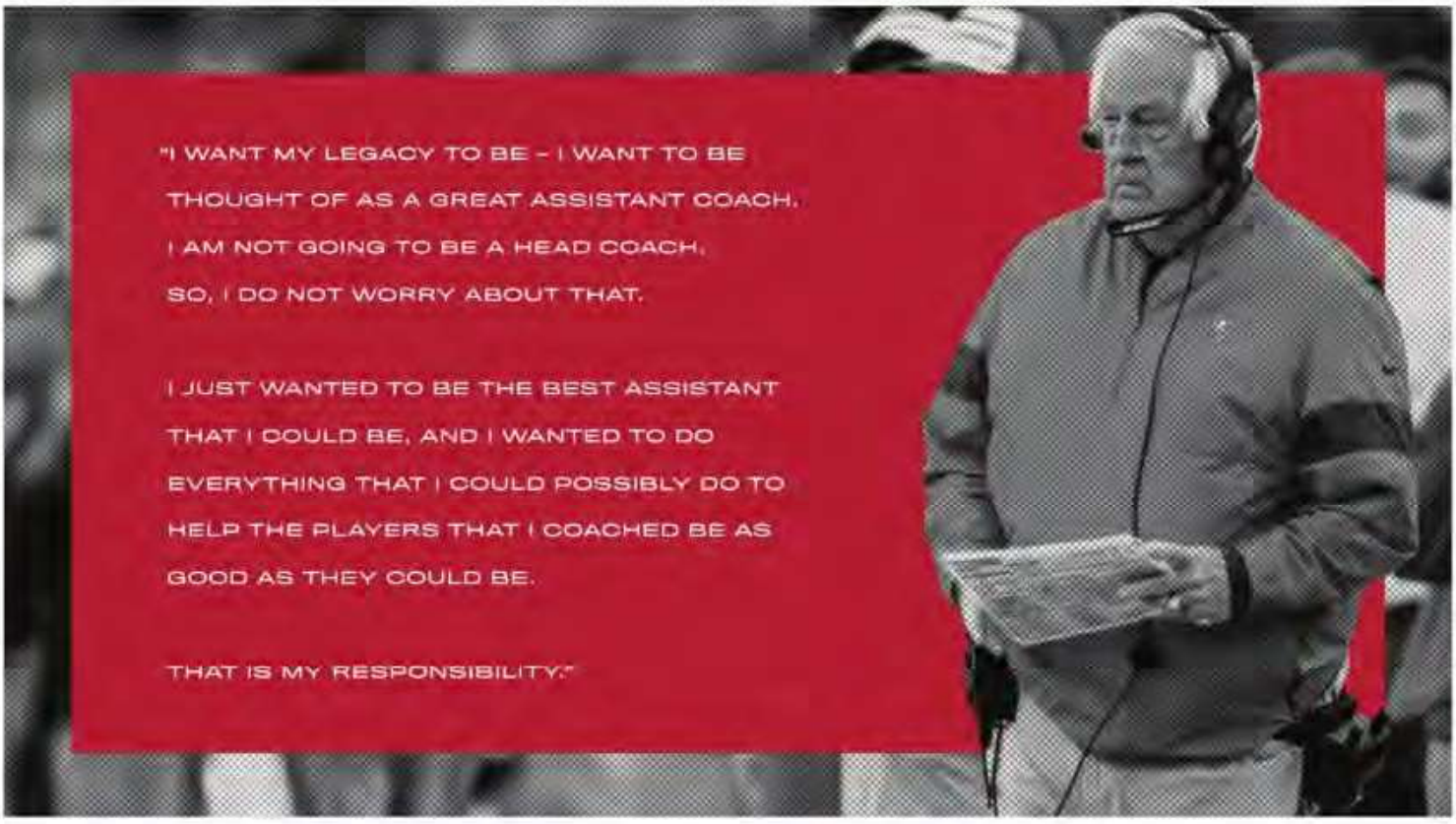
One of Moore's notable career highlights came in the 2006 AFC Championship Game. The Colts fell behind 21-3 against Bill Belichick and the Patriots. Moore helped Manning orchestrate an improbable comeback in thrilling fashion. That game served as the first of three AFC title rivalry game victories over New England, the greatest comeback in NFL Conference Championship game history and the fourth largest comeback in NFL history. As Will Smith's "Welcome to Miami" blared through the stadium, the raucous Colts' crowd erupted with tear-streaked faces.

"Here is the game of football," Moore divulged. "My college coach taught me this. When you are on offense, you are like a guy that is buying real estate and you have $60,000 to buy real estate. You have 60 plays to buy real estate, so how much real estate can you buy with those 60 plays? Don't waste them. 'If you see something, go for it,' that is what I always told Peyton. 'If you see it, go for it. If it does not work, blame me. Because, if it doesn't work and you don't see it, then I did not do a good job preparing you because that is my responsibility. That's not your fault.' Play smart, not scared."

Moore spent two years as a senior assistant for the Colts before occupying consulting roles with the New York Jets and Tennessee Titans in 2011 and 2012, respectively. He took a forced sabbatical from the game in 2013, before returning as an assistant head coach and offensive consultant in Arizona for Arians (2014-17).

He then relocated with Arians to Tampa Bay in August of 2019 for a consulting gig. He spent three seasons working with Tom Brady (2020-2022) and like his time with Manning, Moore captured a Super Bowl ring with the Buccaneers (LV).

"When he [Arians] got a head coaching job in 2013, he called me," Moore described. "Now, I had called up coaches trying to get a job and they wouldn't return the phone call, but Bruce called me. I am extremely indebted to Bruce, and I am indebted to Jason Licht and the Glazers. I am indebted to Todd Bowles for keeping me here. I am 84 years old, and they could easily say, 'Tom, enough is enough.' But they are very good to me. Nobody knows how great a feeling it is until you are 84 years old to be able to get up in the morning and go to work. Nobody has an idea, and it is the greatest feeling in the world, and I am with people that I want to be around.


"I WANT MY LEGACY TO BE - I WANT TO BE
THOUGHT OF AS A GREAT ASSISTANT COACH.
I AM NOT GOING TO BE A HEAD COACH,
SO, I DO NOT WORRY ABOUT THAT.
I JUST WANTED TO BE THE BEST ASSISTANT
THAT I COULD BE, AND I WANTED TO DO
EVERYTHING THAT I COULD POSSIBLY DO TO
HELP THE PLAYERS THAT I COACHED BE AS
GOOD AS THEY COULD BE.
THAT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY."

"I am most proud of having helped a lot of individual players go on and have successful careers both on and off the field. I am most proud of working with assistant coaches and head coaches and being part of a team that puts winning football together and I am very privileged. To me, it is a privilege to coach in the NFL. I have been very fortunate to have a very supportive family because they have had to sacrifice a lot for me to live a dream and that is what I have done. I have lived a dream."

Every morning like clockwork, Moore gets up between two and two-thirty in the morning and arrives at the Bucs' headquarters around three a.m. Under the veil of darkness while most of the world sleeps, Moore is the first one in the building and begins analyzing tape in his office as the aroma of coffee fills the room. In his eighties, Moore approaches each day working in the NFL with emboldened strength, wholeheartedly pouring himself into the game that has given his life purpose.

Moore points to the whiteboard with various markings, "Do you see those six things listed on the board?

"Those are six problems that you have to fight that can ruin players and teams: Greed, Jealousy, Boredom, Death By Inches, Bitching and Agendas. What is death by inches? Well, you work four hours a day and you win the Super Bowl so the next year you think you are cool, and you back off. Then, you only work two hours. Well, the great ones never die by inches. Peyton Manning prepared for the last game of his career the same way that he prepared for the first one. Same with Tom Brady and Terry Bradshaw - all the great ones do."

Moore embodies that creed daily. Dedicated and philosophical, the wiry grey-haired man is 84, with a face representing a life well-lived, but there is an abounding gleam of youthfulness as he stares at the route patterns on the monitor. He is entering his 46th season as an NFL coach and his 63rd overall campaign in either the NFL or college ranks. The offensive mastermind has seen every type of football over the years from power-run principles to the evolution of pass-oriented concepts and the spread. Moore has not only kept up with the numerous shifts but has reinvented what we see today on the gridiron. In the modern era of Sean McVay, Kyle Shanahan and Matt LaFleur, Moore is still an inventive pioneer. His insatiable passion for football has burned for decades, carrying an acclaimed career to its pinnacle: Canton.

"It will be the greatest day of my life," Moore says, as his voice cracks. "Who would ever have thought it? For me, that is the crescendo, the top of the mountain. I am very honored and very humbled because there have been a lot of great coaches over the years who have coached in this league and this award is a reflection of the great organizations, coaches and players that I have had the opportunity to work with during my career. Everything works out. You have to have a guardian angel and I sure as hell think I've got one because a lot of very fortunate things have happened to me that I really can't explain. I am honored and it is the highlight of my entire career."

Back in his office, Moore presents the antithesis of a touted offensive guru who has coached more Hall of Famers than any living individual. He is dressed in his traditional Bucs' red pullover, with a pair of glasses neatly placed on the brim of his nose. His pronounced wrinkles, the evidentiary reality of life experience. He leans on the desk, mind fortified, and as the word "legacy" reverberates in the room, Moore's piercing eyes fill with tears. The selfless coach donning a crown of wisdom, promotes his players.

"I want my legacy to be - I want to be thought of as a great assistant coach. I am not going to be a head coach. So, I do not worry about that. I just wanted to be the best assistant that I could be, and I wanted to do everything that I could possibly do to help the players that I coached be as good as they could be. That is my responsibility. I want to be thought of as a person that did that by the people that I work for: owners, GMs, coaches, and the players that I coached."

For 40-plus years, Moore has been the set of eyes evaluating film and the innovative mind that generates solutions between the hash marks. He is in the results business and not the recognition business. The legend has deep roots forged in the fabric of football. Moore was born a student of the game, and it all has led to the achievement encompassing his extensive unorthodox journey.

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15	DIVISION TITLE APPEARANCES
5	SUPER BOWL APPEARANCES
4	SUPER BOWL RINGS
1	DREAM

The distinguished and lengthy career of Moore has inspired many – pupils, contemporaries, and competitors alike.

"I think the fact that he is still here even with new coaches coming in is just a testament to his knowledge of the game," Vita Vea, the Buccaneers' nose tackle, described. "One night after meetings, Coach Moore and I were watching the U-Dub [University of Washington] game vs. Michigan State on the TV. The next thing you know, U-Dub got backed up. I looked at Coach Moore and I asked, 'What would you run right here?' He looked at me, while eating his strawberry ice cream, and he responded, 'I would get my fastest guys and I would put them on the outside and tell them to run straight. Vertical routes. Then, I would throw it to one of them.' Sure enough, U-Dub comes out of the huddle, and they run exactly what he described to me. Touchdown."

Answers.

Beaming with exuberance, Tom Moore peers out the window, dwelling on the game he has been grateful to have as a life-altering catalyst. But in reality, the game is lucky to have had Moore as an ambassador for decades. With an unrelenting passion for football and dedication to his craft, Moore blazed an unprecedented trail.

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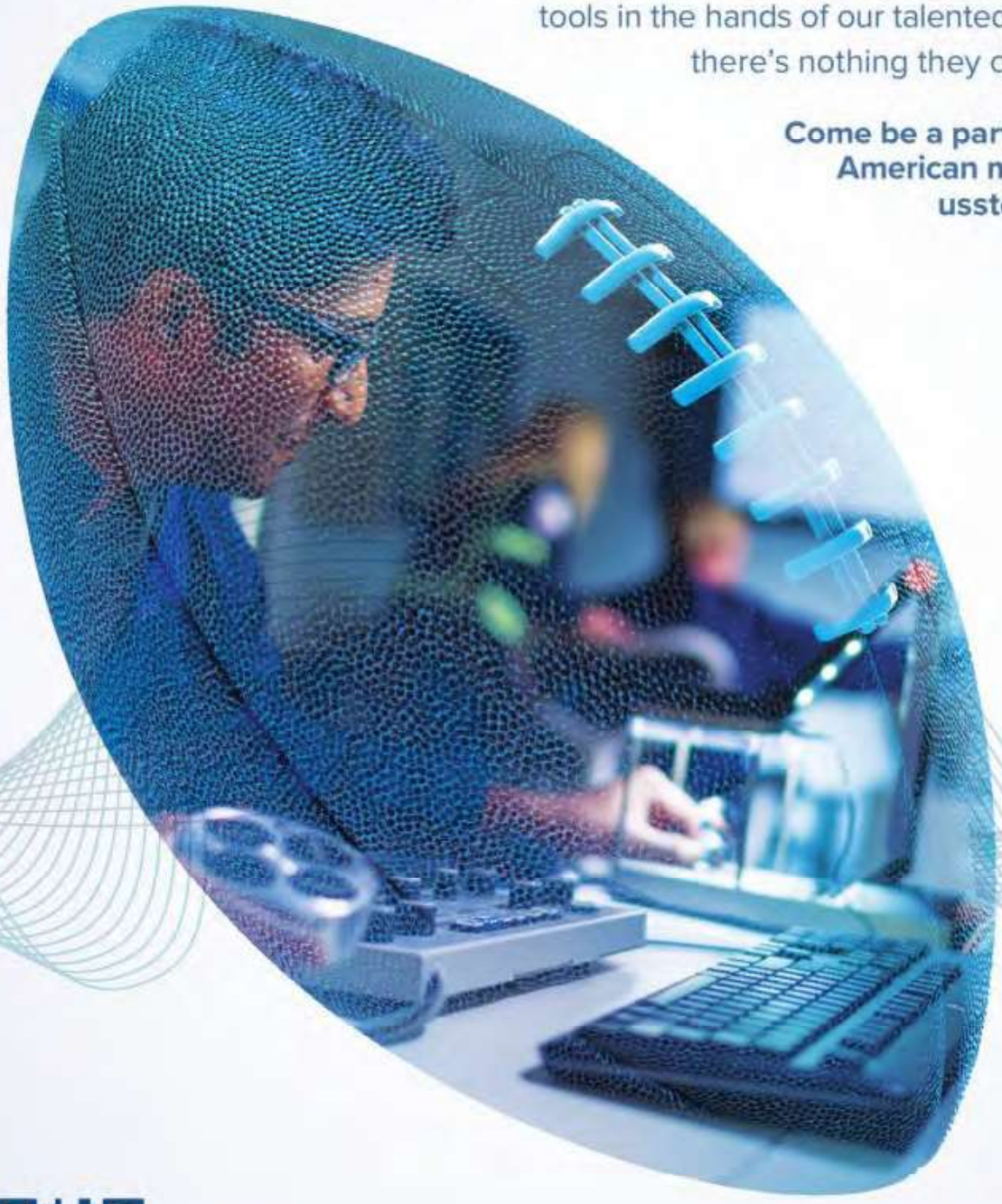

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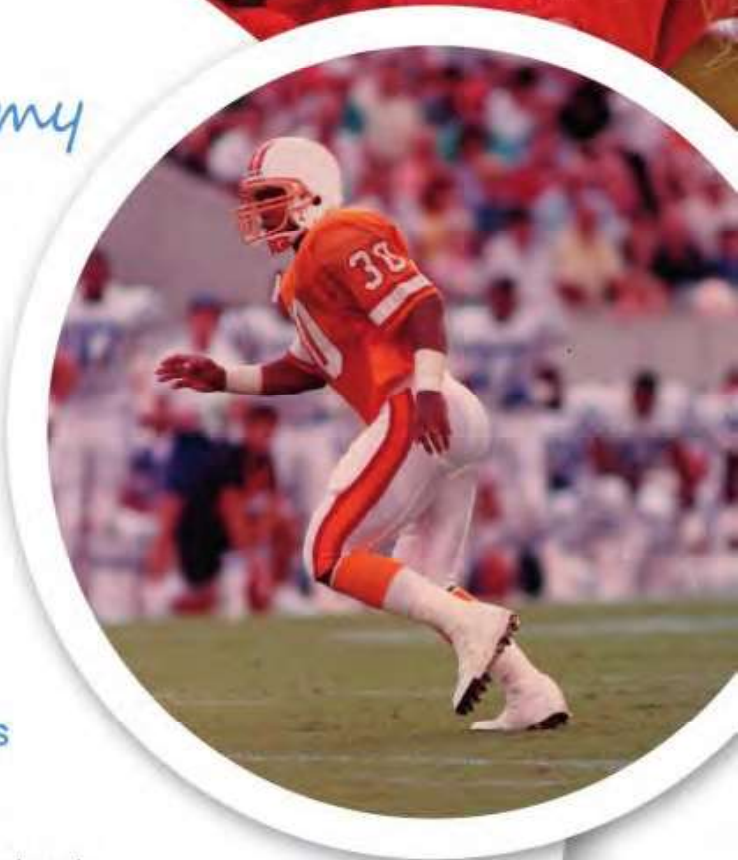

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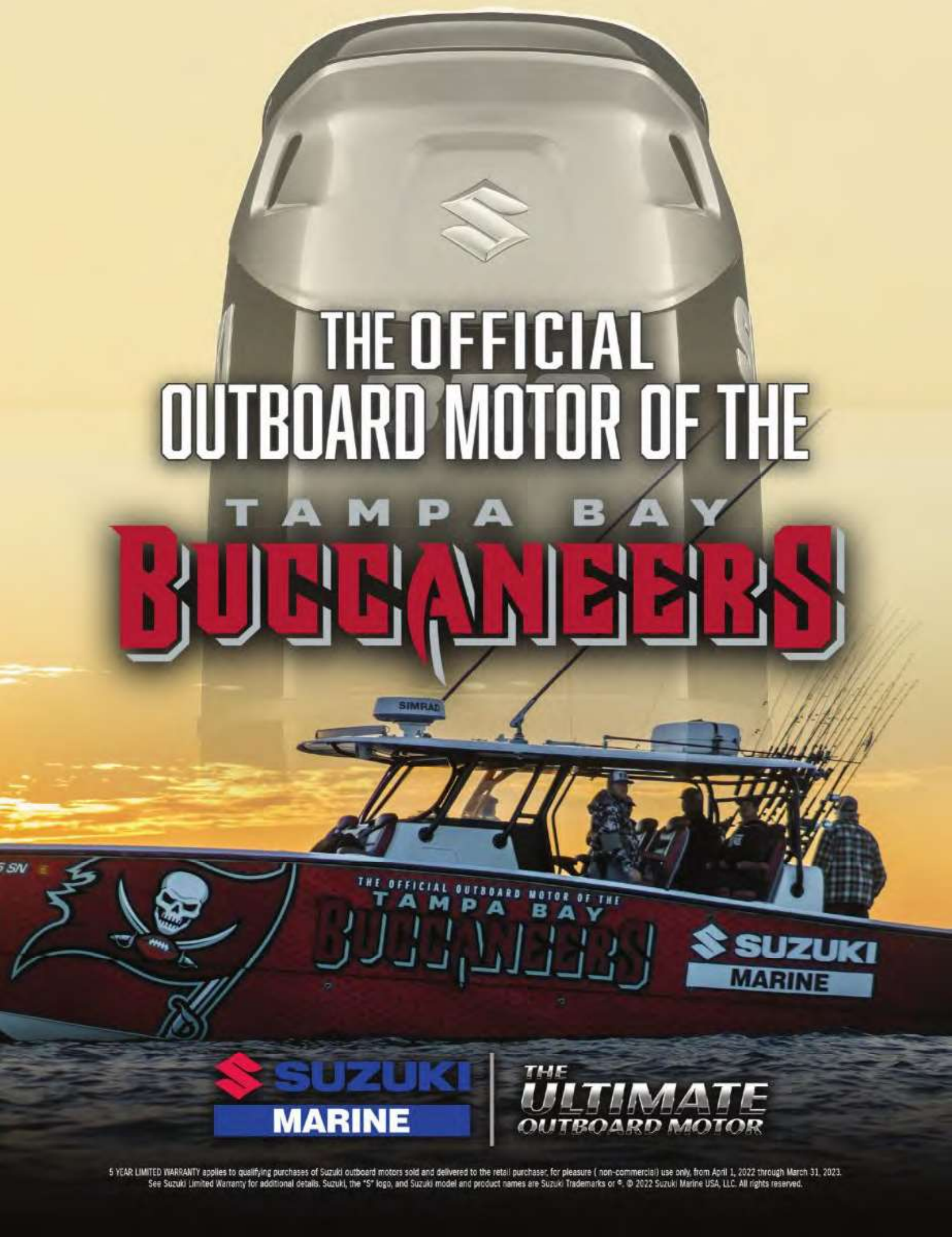

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HALL OF FAME

On August 5, Rondé Barber was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame this summer in a ceremony in Canton, Ohio. He joins defensive end Lee Roy Selmon (Class of 1995), defensive tackle Warren Sapp (2013), linebacker Derrick Brooks (2014), head coach Tony Dungy (2016) and safety John Lynch (2021) among those enshrined who spent at least six seasons as a member of the Buccaneers organization.

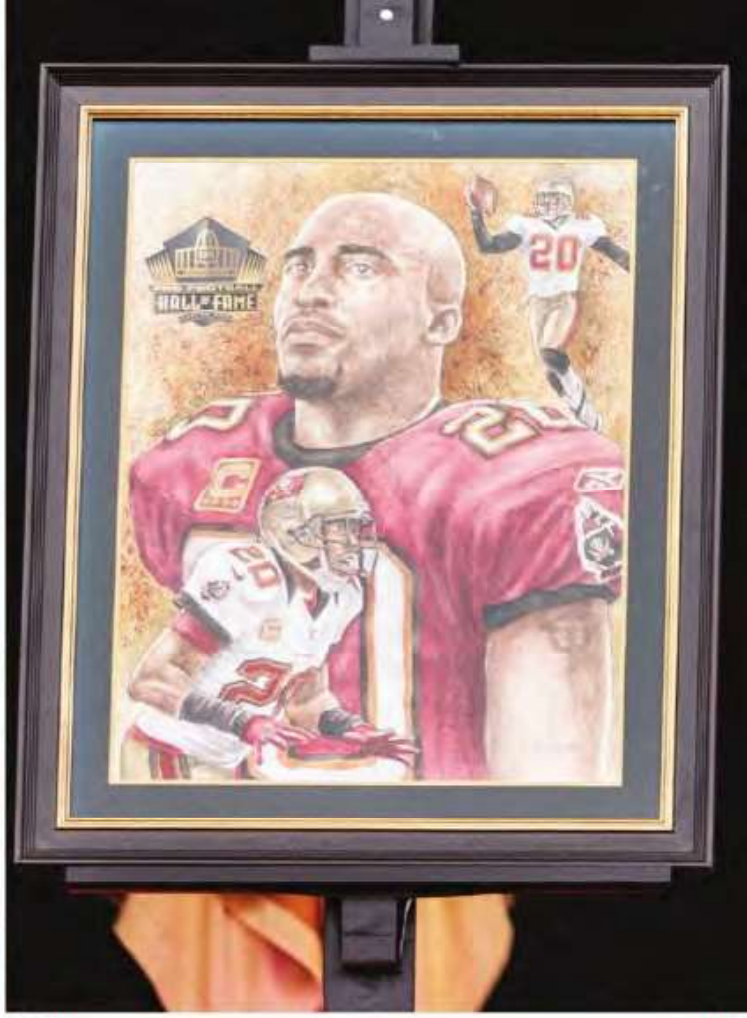
Barber was drafted by the Buccaneers in the third round (No. 66 overall) of the 1997 NFL Draft. He spent all 16 seasons of his NFL career with Tampa Bay, finishing as the franchise's all-time leader in both games played (241) and games started (232). His 232 starts are tied for the third-most all-time among defensive backs since the 1970 AFL-NFL merger, per TruMedia records. Barber also recorded a streak of 215 consecutive starts – tied for the seventh-longest in NFL history.

Over the course of his professional career, Barber amassed 1,428 tackles – which stand as the second-most in franchise history behind only Derrick Brooks – 28.0 sacks, 47 interceptions, eight interception return touchdowns, 243 passes defensed, 15 forced fumbles, 11 fumble recoveries and six additional touchdowns on fumble returns and blocked/deflected punts. A member of Tampa Bay's Super Bowl XXXVII championship team, Barber also played in 10 playoff games with nine starts, recording 50 tackles, 11 passes defensed, two interceptions (one returned for a touchdown), one sack and one fumble recovery.

Barber is the only player in NFL history to record 25-or-more sacks and 40-or-more interceptions and one of just four players with 20-plus sacks and 35-plus interceptions, joining fellow Hall of Famers LeRoy Butler, Brian Dawkins and Charles Woodson. His 28.0 sacks are the second-most all-time among defensive backs, trailing only Rodney Harrison (30.5). Further proving his play-making ability and versatility, Barber's 14 non-offensive touchdowns are the fourth-most in NFL regular season history, while his nine interception return touchdowns between the regular season and postseason combined rank seventh in league annals.

The Roanoke, Virginia, native enjoyed a decorated career earning a number of accolades, including five Pro Bowl selections, five AP All-Pro honors and nine Defensive Player of the Week awards. Known for his leadership, Barber was selected as a team captain in nine consecutive seasons for the Buccaneers (2004-12), while also being named the team's Man of the Year in 2006 and the team's Ed Block Courage Award winner in 2011.

PRO FOOTBALL
HALL OF FAME
CANTON, OHIO


HALL OF FAME
20

HALL OF FAME
CANTON, OHIO
PRO FOOTBALL
HALL OF FAME

2023 TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	NFL EXP.	COLLEGE/HOMETOWN
0	Yaya Diaby	OLB	6-4	270	R	Louisville/Atlanta, GA
1	Rachaad White	RB	6-0	214	2	Arizona State/Kansas City, MO
2	Kyle Trask	QB	6-5	236	3	Florida/Manvel, TX
4	Chase McLaughlin	K	6-0	190	5	Illinois/Cypress, TX
5	Jake Camarda	P	6-1	193	2	Georgia/Norcross, GA
6	Baker Mayfield	QB	6-1	215	6	Oklahoma/Austin, TX
7	Shaquil Barrett	OLB	6-2	250	10	Colorado State/Baltimore, MD
8	SirVocea Dennis	LB	6-1	230	R	Pittsburgh/Syracuse, NY
9	Joe Tryon-Shoyinka	OLB	6-5	259	3	Washington/Renton, WA
10	Trey Palmer	WR	6-1	190	R	Nebraska/Kentwood, LA
11	John Wolford	QB	6-1	200	4	Wake Forest/Jacksonville, FL
13	Mike Evans	WR	6-5	231	10	Texas A&M/Galveston, TX
14	Chris Godwin	WR	6-1	209	7	Penn State/Middletown, DE
15	Richard LeCounte III	S	5-11	196	2	Georgia/Riceboro, GA
16	Keenan Isaac	CB	6-3	190	R	Alabama State/Midfield, AL
17	Taye Barber	WR	5-10	190	R	TCU/Cypress, TX
18	Rakim Jarrett	WR	6-0	192	R	Maryland/Palmer Park, MD
19	David Moore	WR	6-0	219	5	East Central/Gainesville, TX
21	Ke'Shawn Vaughn	RB	5-10	214	4	Vanderbilt/Nashville, TN
22	Chase Edmonds	RB	5-9	201	6	Fordham/Harrisburg, PA
23	Ryan Neal	S	6-3	200	4	Southern Illinois/Merrillville, IN
24	Carlton Davis III	CB	6-1	206	6	Auburn/Miami, FL
25	Patrick Laird	RB	6-1	205	4	California/San Luis Obispo, CA
25	Kedrick Whitehead Jr.	S	5-11	195	R	Delaware/Middletown, DE
26	Kaevon Merriweather	S	6-0	212	R	Iowa/Belleville, MI
27	Zyon McCollum	CB	6-2	199	2	Sam Houston State/Galveston, TX
28	Cephus Johnson	WR	6-5	220	R	Southeastern Louisiana/Mobile, AL
28	Rodarius Williams	CB	6-0	193	3	Oklahoma State/Shreveport, LA
29	Christian Izien	S	5-10	200	R	Rutgers/Far Rockaway, NY
30	Dee Delaney	DB	5-11	200	3	Miami (FL)/Beaufort, SC
31	Antoine Winfield Jr.	S	5-9	203	4	Minnesota/The Woodlands, TX
32	Josh Hayes	DB	6-0	190	R	Kansas State/Lakeland, FL
33	Jose Ramirez	OLB	6-2	252	R	Eastern Michigan/Lake Alfred, FL
34	Nolan Turner	S	6-1	202	2	Clemson/Vestavia Hills, AL
35	Jamel Dean	CB	6-1	206	5	Auburn/Cocoa, FL
36	Don Gardner	CB	6-1	180	1	South Dakota State/Chicago, IL
37	Anthony Chesley	CB	6-0	190	3	Coastal Carolina/Temple Hills, MD
38	Derrek Pitts Jr.	CB	6-1	193	R	North Carolina State/Dunbar, WV
39	Avery Young	S	6-0	198	R	Rutgers/Coatesville, PA
41	Ko Kieft	TE	6-5	265	2	Minnesota/Sioux Center, IA
43	Ronnie Brown Jr.	RB	6-0	190	R	Shepherd/Baltimore, MD
44	Sean Tucker	RB	5-10	205	R	Syracuse/Owings Mills, MD
45	Devin White	LB	6-0	237	5	LSU/Springhill, LA
46	Hamilcar Rashed Jr.	OLB	6-2	251	1	Oregon State/Phoenix, AZ
48	Charles Snowden	OLB	6-7	245	1	Virgnia/Silver Spring, MD

2023 TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	NFL EXP.	COLLEGE/HOMETOWN
49	Cam Gill	OLB	6-3	240	4	Wagner/Douglasville, GA
50	Vita Vea	NT	6-4	347	6	Washington/Milpitas, CA
51	J.J. Russell	LB	6-1	225	2	Memphis/Grenada, MS
52	K.J. Britt	LB	6-0	235	3	Auburn/Oxford, AL
53	Brandon Bouyer-Randle	LB	6-2	240	R	Connecticut/Battle Creek, MI
54	Lavonte David	LB	6-1	233	12	Nebraska/Miami, FL
56	Chris Murray	OL	6-2	308	R	Oklahoma/Palmdale, CA
57	Ulysees Gilbert III	LB	6-0	230	4	Akron/Ocala, FL
58	Markees Watts	OLB	6-1	240	R	Charlotte/Lancaster, SC
60	Nick Leverett	OL	6-4	310	3	Rice/Salisbury, NC
61	Silas Dzansi	T	6-5	335	R	Virginia Tech/Woodbridge, VA
62	C.J. Brewer	DL	6-2	290	1	Coastal Carolina/Bowdon, GA
64	Aaron Stinnie	G	6-3	312	6	James Madison/Charlottesville, VA
66	Ryan Jensen	C	6-4	319	10	Colorado State-Pueblo/Fort Morgan, CO
67	Luke Goedeke	G	6-5	312	2	Central Michigan/Whitelaw, WI
68	Michael Niese	OL	6-5	295	1	Temple/Chesterfield, MO
69	Cody Mauch	G	6-6	303	R	North Dakota State/Hankinson, ND
70	Robert Hainsey	OL	6-4	306	3	Notre Dame/Pittsburgh, PA
71	Matt Feiler	OL	6-6	330	7	Bloomsburg/Strasburg, PA
72	Luke Haggard	OL	6-7	305	R	Indiana/Petaluma, CA
73	Brandon Walton	OL	6-5	300	2	Florida Atlantic/Largo, FL
75	John Molchon	G	6-5	309	4	Boise State/Las Vegas, NV
76	Raiqwon O'Neal	T	6-4	305	R	UCLA/Conway, SC
77	Justin Skule	T	6-6	315	4	Vanderbilt/Clifton, VA
78	Tristan Wirfs	T	6-5	320	4	Iowa/Mount Vernon, IA
79	Patrick O'Connor	DL	6-4	270	5	Eastern Michigan/Chicago, IL
80	Kaylon Geiger Sr.	WR	5-10	180	1	Texas Tech/Fort Worth, TX
81	Ryan Miller	WR	6-2	221	R	Furman/Jackson, TN
82	Dominique Dafney	TE	6-3	235	2	Indiana State/West Des Moines, IA
83	Deven Thompkins	WR	5-8	155	2	Utah State/Fort Myers, FL
84	Tanner Taula	TE	6-6	255	R	Illinois State/Blue Springs, MO
85	Kade Warner	WR	6-1	204	R	Kansas State/Scottsdale, AZ
86	Evan Deckers	LS	6-4	244	R	Duke/Avon, CT
87	Payne Durham	TE	6-5	255	R	Purdue/Suwanee, GA
88	Cade Otton	TE	6-5	247	2	Washington/Tumwater, WA
89	David Wells	TE	6-6	260	3	San Diego State/Clovis, CA
90	Logan Hall	DL	6-6	283	2	Houston/Belton, TX
91	Mike Greene	DT	6-3	293	1	James Madison/Richmond, VA
92	William Gholston	DL	6-6	281	11	Michigan State/Detroit, MI
93	Willington Previlon	DL	6-5	285	1	Rutgers/Orange, NJ
94	Calijah Kancey	DL	6-0	280	R	Pittsburgh/Miami, FL
95	Deadrin Senat	DT	6-1	305	5	USF/Immokalee, FL
96	Greg Gaines	DL	6-1	312	5	Washington/La Habra, CA
97	Zach Triner	LS	6-3	245	5	Assumption/Marshfield, MA
98	Anthony Nelson	OLB	6-7	271	5	Iowa/Urbandale, IA

1 RACHAAD WHITE

RUNNING BACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 214 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Arizona State • **HOMETOWN:** Atlanta, GA

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2 KYLE TRASK
QUARTERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 236 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Florida • **HOMETOWN:** Manvel, TX

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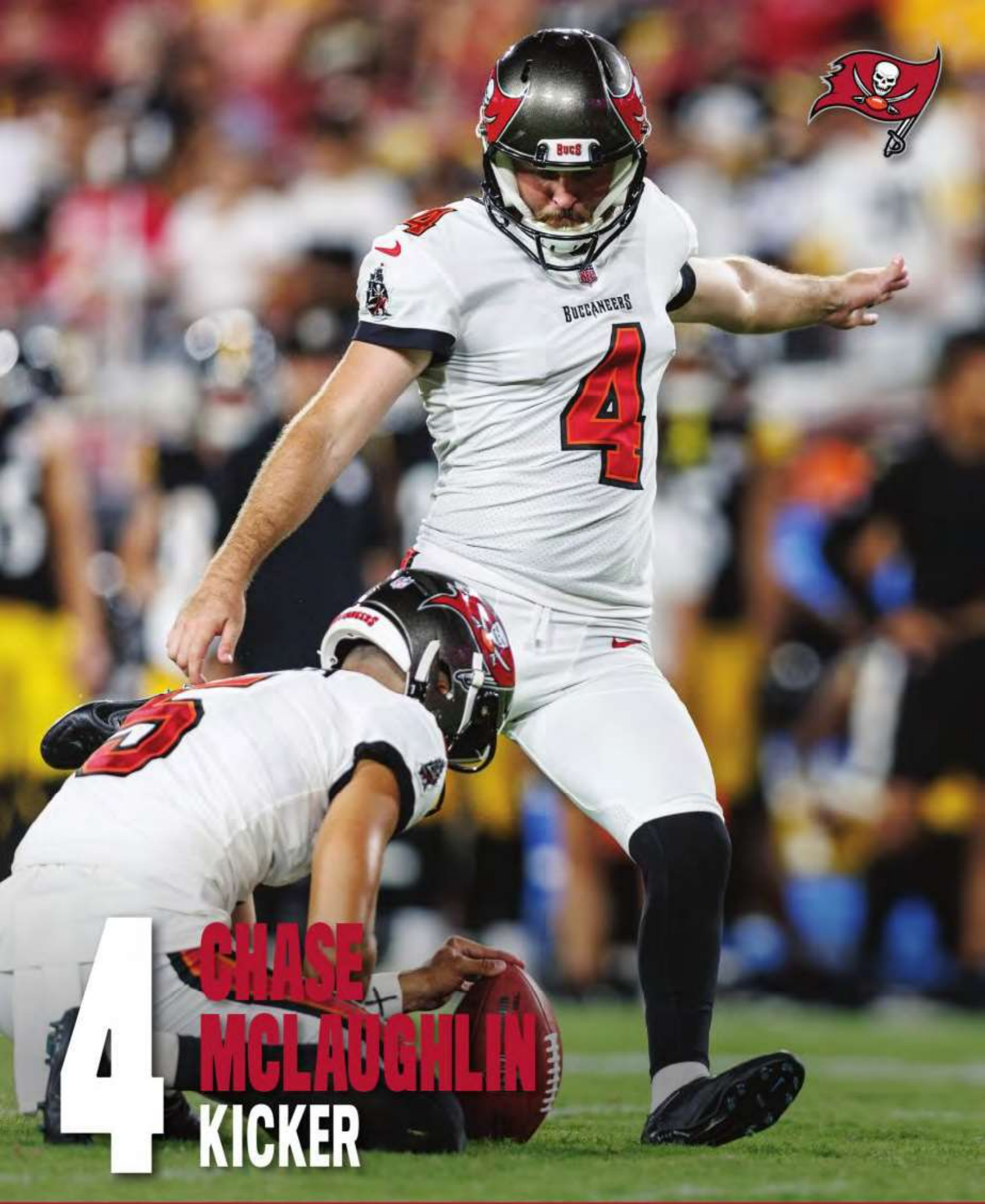

4 CHASE MCLAUGHLIN

KICKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 175 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** Illinois • **HOMETOWN:** Cypress, TX

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5 JAKE CAMARDA
PUNTER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 193 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Georgia • **HOMETOWN:** Norcross, GA

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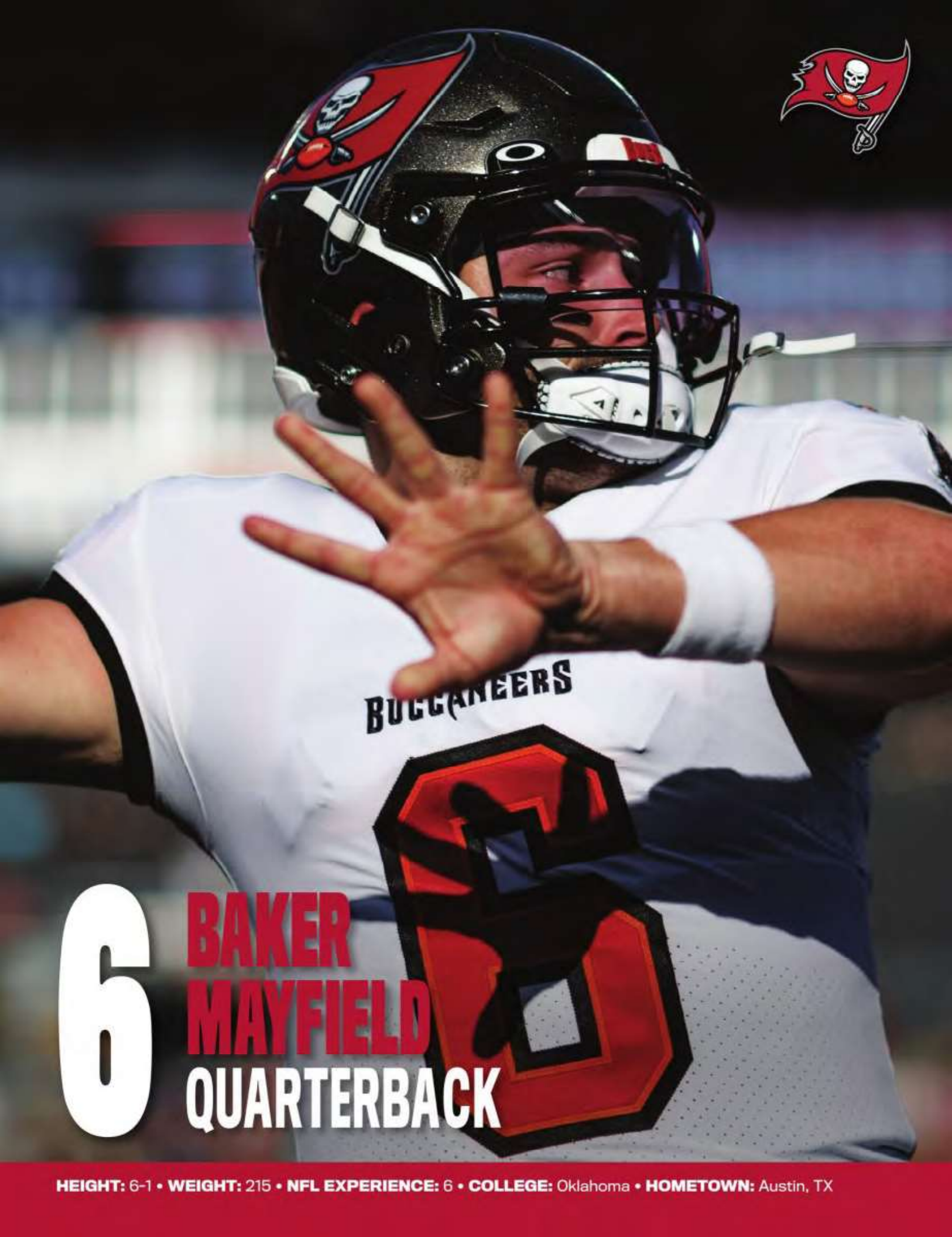

6 BAKER MAYFIELD
QUARTERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 215 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 6 • **COLLEGE:** Oklahoma • **HOMETOWN:** Austin, TX

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7 SHAQUIL BARRETT

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 250 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 10 • **COLLEGE:** Colorado State • **HOMETOWN:** Baltimore, MD

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9 JOE TRYON-SHOYINKA

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 259 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Washington • **HOMETOWN:** Renton, WA

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11 JOHN WOLFORD
QUARTERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 200 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Wake Forest • **HOMETOWN:** Jacksonville, FL

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13 MIKE EVANS
WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 231 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 10 • **COLLEGE:** Texas A&M • **HOMETOWN:** Galveston, TX

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14 CHRIS GODWIN

WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 208 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 7 • **COLLEGE:** Penn State • **HOMETOWN:** Middletown, DE

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BRICK BY BRICK

CHRIS GODWIN'S ROAD TO RECOVERY

By Brianna Dix

An in-depth look at the rehabilitation process post-ACL reconstructive surgery through the lens of Chris Godwin and his wife, Mariah.

Brick-by-brick – an expression that Buccaneers' wide receiver Chris Godwin personifies. Although the perspective is one established amidst an onerous rehabilitation process, it fostered resiliency.

After working his way back from a devasting ACL-MCL tear on December 19 that prematurely ended Godwin's 2021 campaign and a subsequent hamstring injury in Week One that sidelined him for the next two games, Godwin made his highly-anticipated return on Sunday against the Chiefs. Surrounded by a sea of red inside Raymond James Stadium, No. 14 ran onto the field to the elation of the crowd. Every route, cut and catch in traffic by Godwin distanced him from the singular play that altered his course.

Late in 2021, on a routine crossing route against the Saints in Week 15 on third down– one that Godwin had run an innumerable number of times before – his prolific season came to a crashing halt. Godwin suffered a devastating knee-injury after taking an egregious low hit in a collision with P.J. Williams. Early indications were that the injury was to the MCL, and the team was hopeful Godwin could potentially return for the playoffs. However, further testing the following day revealed the worst possible scenario: A torn anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee that would require surgery.

"My first thoughts were, 'How can I get back into the game?' Godwin described. "It was a big game for us. Anytime you play a divisional game – especially that late in the season – it could potentially impact the playoffs. That was my first thought, but looking back on it, I'm glad that I didn't end up going back in because I feel like I would have beaten myself up a bit if I had gone back in and then ended up with the same result; the next day finding out that the ACL was in fact torn. If I had gone back in, I would have felt like I put myself in an increased risk. I would have felt like I caused it as opposed to it being a freak play."

At the time of the injury, Godwin accounted for a third of Tom Brady's targets. He concluded the season with 98 receptions (second-most in franchise history) for 1,103 yards, adding five touchdowns to the mix. In the ensuing months, an awakening commenced as reality sunk in. The injury not only became the platform for a comeback but initiated the process of discovery through recovery.

The ACL – one of two ligaments that crosses over the middle of the knee – connects the thighbone to the shinbone, helping to stabilize the joint. Before the surgery, Godwin underwent physical therapy to reduce pain and swelling, restoring the knee's range of motion/full extension, and strengthening the quad for post-operation. With medical advancements in recent years, what used to be a career-ending setback has transitioned into a record-setting resurgence for many professional athletes.

On January 3rd, Godwin underwent successful reconstructive surgery to repair his ACL and MCL. The procedure was performed by renowned Dr. James Andrews in Pensacola, Florida. Fortunately, the procedure revealed he suffered no meniscus damage. During the procedure, the surgeon removed Godwin's damaged ligament and replaced it with a patellar tendon, or graft (one of the three options – deemed to be the strongest of the available selections). Dr. Andrews then drilled sockets into the thighbone and shinbone to accurately position the graft, which was secured to Godwin's bones with screws. The graft served as temporary scaffolding for new ligament tissue to grow.

"For a few months there, it felt like there was a war being fought inside of my leg," Godwin recalled. "That was especially the case for the first couple of weeks, because it is a lot that happened. There was a lot of trauma that my body went through. It's reconstructive surgery and part of my tendon is now placed where my ACL was; things have been cut, there are screws in there, there are stitches, there is a lot of healing that had to go on for my body and that is not a comfortable process at all."

"On top of that, there is a lot of the range of motion that I had to do and it can be pretty painful because I had a lot of swelling inside my knee joint, which makes it that much harder to move. There would be times where the swelling would be more liquid and fluid, and whenever it was like that it was easier to move. But that is like the difference between having a balloon filled with water and then a balloon filled with sand. Sometimes, when the swelling was firmer, it was like trying to move that balloon with sand in it. That was pretty painful and uncomfortable, but I just chalked it up to being all part of the process. I had never been through anything like this before in my life. That was my first major injury and hopefully my last, but every day to me was a brand-new day. People can tell you what to expect in terms of it being a long process and things to focus on, but nothing can prepare you for how your body is going to respond to everything that's happening."

Football captivates as athletes overcome recurring obstacles to achieve a common goal in the timeless rendition of survival, fall, victory and defeat. Eventually, hard work pays dividends but it is not guaranteed on any given play. It is a perpetual cycle driven by a wholehearted pursuit of greatness. Additionally, Godwin's progression embodied this theme.

The arduous rehabilitation process was broken down into stages, with each day bringing with it a mind of its own. One day's strides did not necessarily lead to similar results the next. Minuscule tasks that are often taken for granted; Godwin now coveted and embraced. His leg had become a shell of what it once was and had to gradually be rebuilt. From initially icing the knee to eventually regaining full range of motion, every step optimized growth.

Brick-by-brick

STAGES

Week 1
Focus is spent on regaining the ability to contract the quad with leg raises to work on flexion and reducing inflammation by icing the knee and resting.

Week 2
Bearing weight and continuing to stress basic range of motion and manage swelling in the knee. During the first couple of weeks post-op, the knee is the most vulnerable.

Week 4/First Month
The walking and mechanics' stage. Building lower body strength through biking to support the knee by quad and glute enhancement is crucial. Low-impact activities become possible as the knee continues to grow stronger.

Month 3
Running begins. From the treadmill to the field, full range of motion is targeted by lower-body weightlifting.

Month 5-6
Cutting. Change-of-direction drills begin to build confidence and endurance. Movements are fine-tuned as strengthening exercises continue to support the connective tissue in the knee.

"IT FELT LIKE THERE WAS A WAR BEING FOUGHT INSIDE OF MY LEG"

During the extensive phases, Godwin began to invest mentally in the small victories, along with his wife, Mariah. As he learned to walk, run, jump, and ride a bike all over again with childlike wonder - tasks that Godwin was accustomed to mindlessly performing with ease - both Chris and Mariah commemorated the small achievements that over time formed a bolstered foundation. Jovial reactions to seemingly inconsequential actions helped break up days that felt monotonous and began the trajectory to physical/mental fortitude.

"One thing we would always say is lay one brick at a time, day-by-day," Mariah emphatically remarked. "Do not worry about building the whole house. We have a magnetic notepad tally on the fridge that says 'Bricks,' and we have made a tally of how many bricks have been laid so far. It is crazy because I am pretty sure we are in the 200's. That is another way of celebrating little milestones. We would get back from rehab and make a little tally mark. It is cool because you are laying one each day, but when you look at the tally marks - all 200 - that puts it into perspective."

Chris and Mariah met during their freshman year at Middletown High School, in Delaware. The two quickly forged a rare connection and became best friends. The inseparable pair began dating their freshman year and went on to attend Penn State together upon graduating. After Chris entered the Draft in 2017 and was selected in the third-round by the Buccaneers, both put their academic careers on hold after Year Three to see Chris's dream come to fruition on the grand stage. From Friday Night Lights to Super Bowl confetti - and everything in between - Chris and Mariah have been through every life achievement side by side. On May 7, 2021, a month after hoisting the Lombardi Trophy, Chris donned a ring more invaluable: his wedding band.

"I don't know if there is a way to express just how pivotal of a role she plays in my life," Chris relayed. "Aside from being my wife, she has been my best friend for a decade now and that is not a loose term. That is legitimately my best friend. When I am with her, it does not feel like time has passed. We do not get tired of hanging out with each other, so I think just that fact and the amount of time that we spend together - we know each other like the back of each other's hand - but she has been so consistent in our relationship just in terms of how much she loves me. It doesn't matter what is going on on-the-field or off-the-field, the amount of support that she provides for me is so crucial for me but also just the consistency of being there for me and caring for me. The first two weeks when I was on crutches, there was stuff that I could not do. It literally felt like there was a war going on inside my body, so I was drained of my energy and the first two weeks she was serving me as my nurse. She cooked every single meal for me and made sure all the medication I had to take was being taken at the right times and anything I needed, she was there to do it. It was because she cares about me and there are countless things she does day-in and day-out in our life, but also specifically during this process that made my life easier. I cannot really quantify how vital a role she plays in my life."

Chris and Mariah formed an unwavering bond that cannot be thwarted, embodying unadulterated love. Both openly express vulnerabilities and began prioritizing mental health three years ago - unaware of the challenging road ahead. The Godwins started a 28-day meditation workshop that they both currently perform daily to train the mind. In today's culture, often, people succumb to the notion that circumstances dictate attitude. The Godwins see attitude and perspective as choices, influenced by circumstances. They make a cognizant effort to cultivate a grateful mindset - one that supersedes temporary hardship. Facing adversity is inevitable but being defeated is optional.

"His attitude is incredible," Mariah emphasized. "Those nine months, it has just been him being positive. The day he found out he tore his ACL and came

home; we gave ourselves an hour to just get all of the emotions out. We both cried. We were both frustrated. But the thing is, you cannot carry those with you because that affects the rest of your body, too. We said, 'Ok, we have this night and then after, we move forward.' You get to choose which thoughts you follow and which energy you are going to have and we chose gratitude. We looked at is as an opportunity for Chris to get bigger, better, faster and stronger. In the morning he would laugh and say, 'The work has to get done either way.' Another thing that we have always said since high school is, 'Working hard doesn't guarantee you success but not working definitely guarantees failure.' That is always the attitude we both take. You have to give it all you have all the time, because if not, you are leaving that opportunity on the table. You cannot control the outcome, just like the injury. His energy and resiliency through all of it - he is an inspiring person to know and an especially an inspiring person to live with to see every second of this. I have seen him win high school state championships, I've seen him win bowl games in college, and then to go to the Super Bowl, it is crazy to watch the progression of another person day-in and day-out for over a decade."

Brick-by-brick

That mindset prepared Chris Godwin for the trials that the recovery process entailed and it manifested production on the gridiron. With an unrelenting drive, Godwin has cemented himself as one of the NFL's most dominant weapons out of the slot, evidenced by a three-year contract extension in March. Although Godwin missed the last three games of the 2021 regular season due to that severe knee injury, the Buccaneers expressed their confidence in him, locking him up long-term. As a natural competitor, Godwin beats defenders with physicality at the catch point and utilizes his frame to box out defensive backs over the middle of the field, putting himself in advantageous positions to haul in catches. With elite body control, Godwin can adjust on a dime to the ball in flight and is an aggressive blocker with effectiveness on crack blocks against safeties and linebackers. He plays an integral role in the Bucs' aerial attack and will continue to leave a legacy between the hash marks in 2022.

After weathering a storm, the embattled person who emerges is transformed. Brick-by-brick and day-by-day, Godwin has spent the past 10 months laying the foundation for a comeback. He exudes strength, not only in his ability to persevere through turmoil, but in the courage to start over in pursuit of a committed passion. As determination envelops his mind, hope abounds for the 2022 slate and as Godwin now takes the field, it is the scar on his right knee that propels him forward.

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15 RICHARD LECOUNTE III

SAFETY

HEIGHT: 5-11 • **WEIGHT:** 196 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Georgia • **HOMETOWN:** Riceboro, GA

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19 DAVID MOORE

WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 219 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** East Central • **HOMETOWN:** Gainesville, TX

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21 KE'SHAWN VAUGHN

RUNNING BACK

HEIGHT: 5-10 • **WEIGHT:** 214 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Vanderbilt • **HOMETOWN:** Nashville, TN

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22 CHASE EDMONDS
RUNNING BACK

HEIGHT: 5-9 • **WEIGHT:** 201 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 6 • **COLLEGE:** Fordham • **HOMETOWN:** Harrisburg, PA

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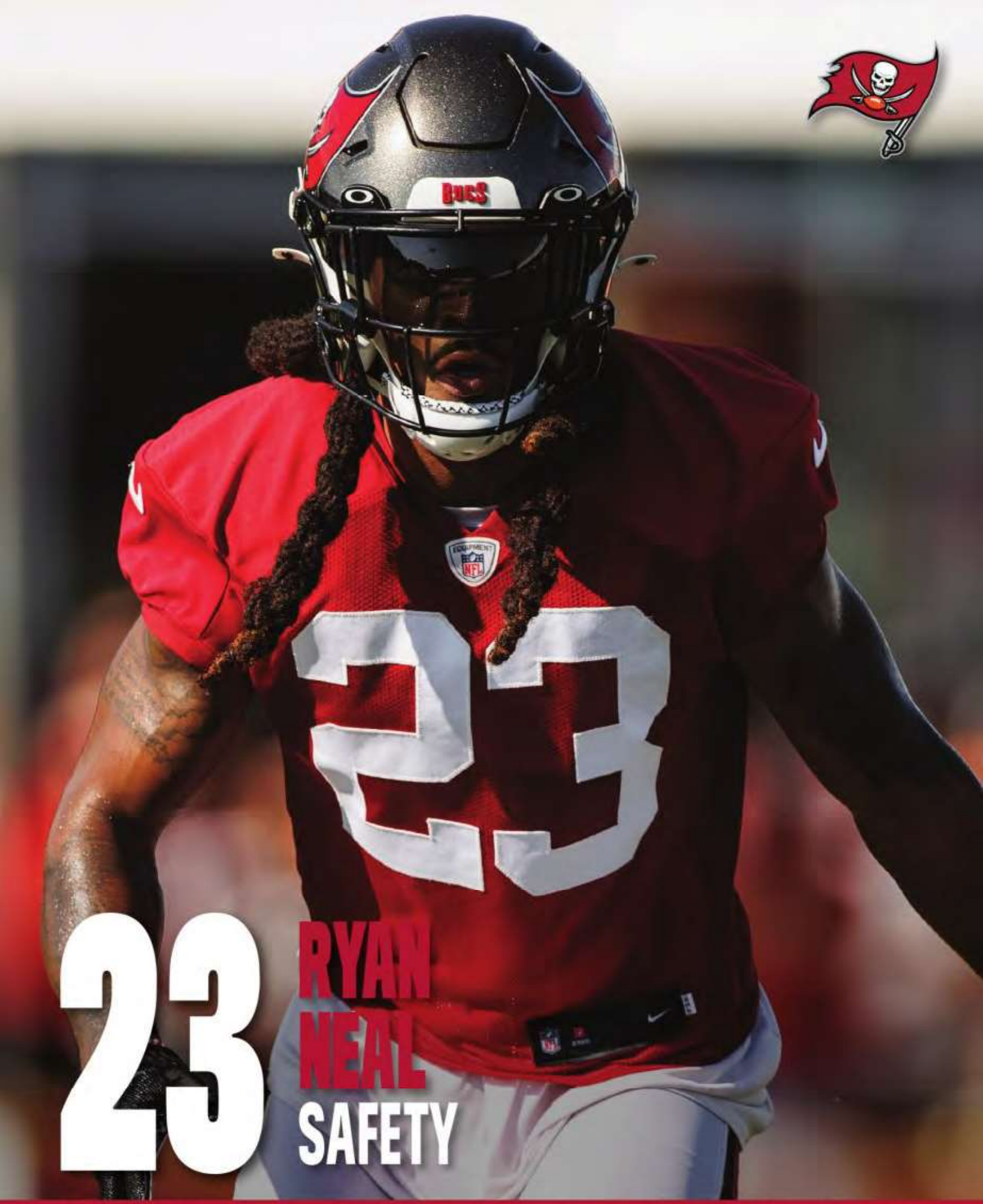

23 RYAN NEAL
SAFETY

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 200 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Southern Illinois • **HOMETOWN:** Merrillville, IN

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CARLTON DAVIS III

CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 206 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 6 • **COLLEGE:** Auburn • **HOMETOWN:** Miami, FL

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25 PATRICK LAIRD

RUNNING BACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 205 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** California • **HOMETOWN:** San Luis Obispo, CA

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27 ZYON McCOLLUM

CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 199 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Sam Houston State • **HOMETOWN:** Galveston, TX

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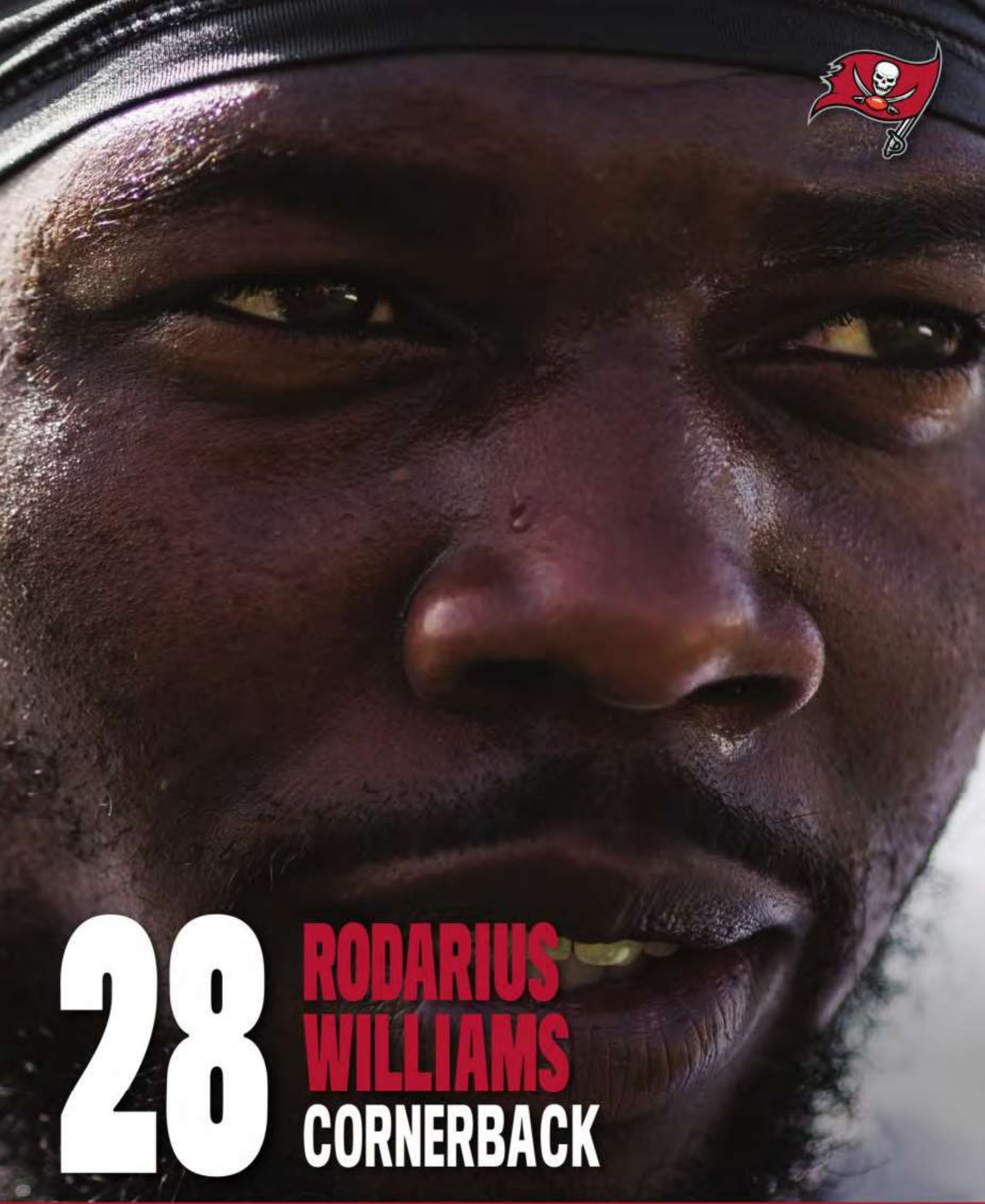

28 RODARIUS WILLIAMS

CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 193 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Oklahoma State • **HOMETOWN:** Shreveport, LA

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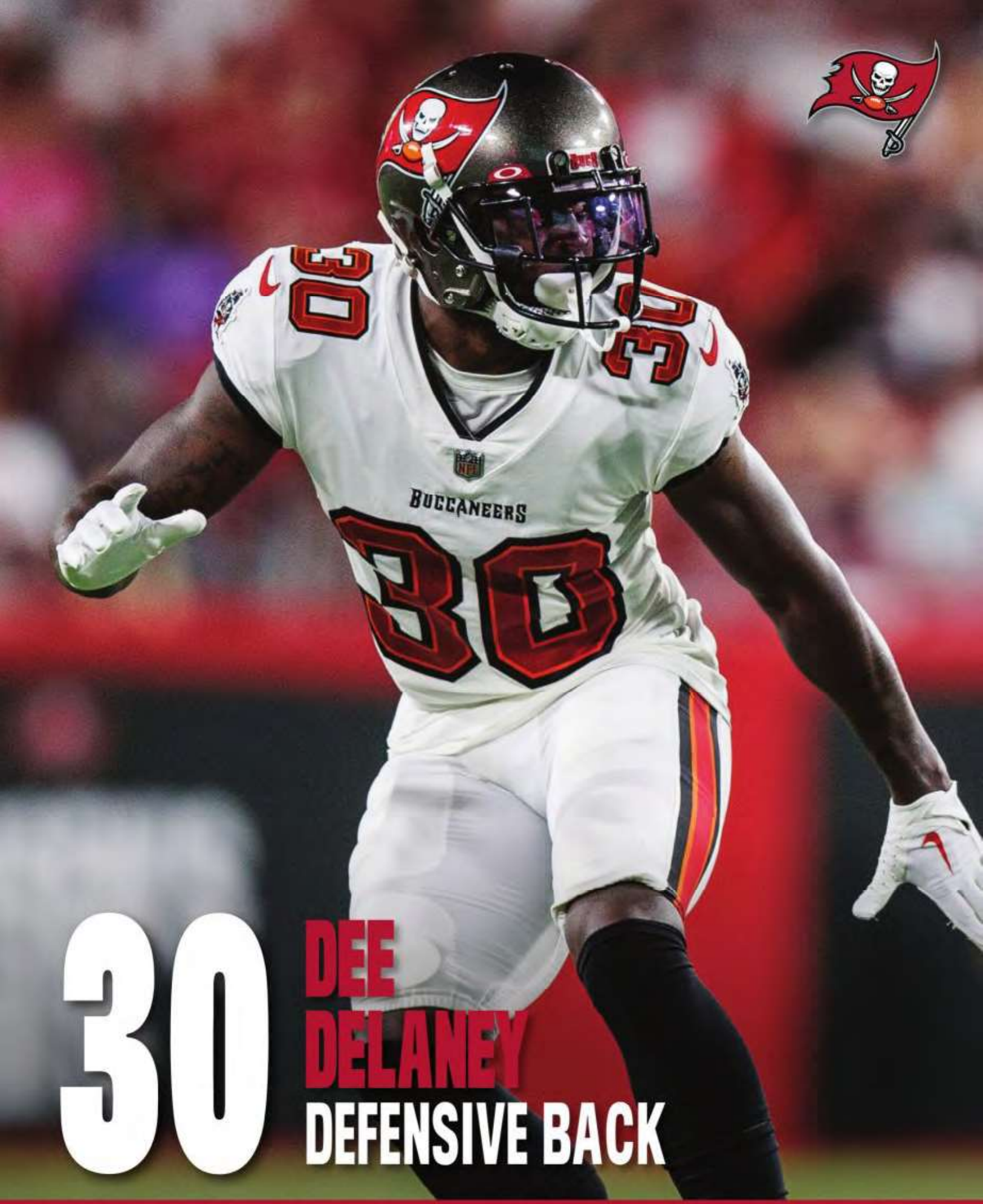

30 DEE DELANEY

DEFENSIVE BACK

HEIGHT: 5-11 • **WEIGHT:** 200 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Miami (FL) • **HOMETOWN:** Beaufort, SC

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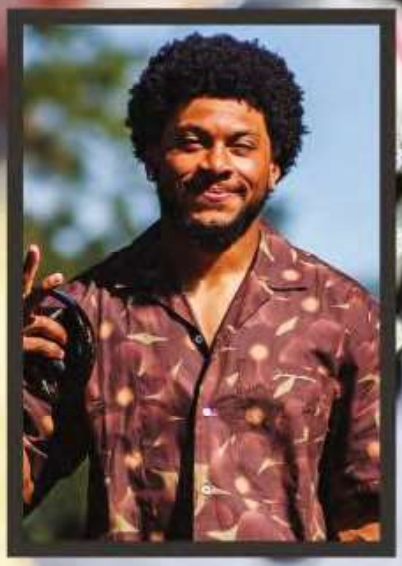

31 ANTOINE WINFIELD JR.

SAFETY

HEIGHT: 5-9 • **WEIGHT:** 203 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Minnesota • **HOMETOWN:** The Woodlands, TX

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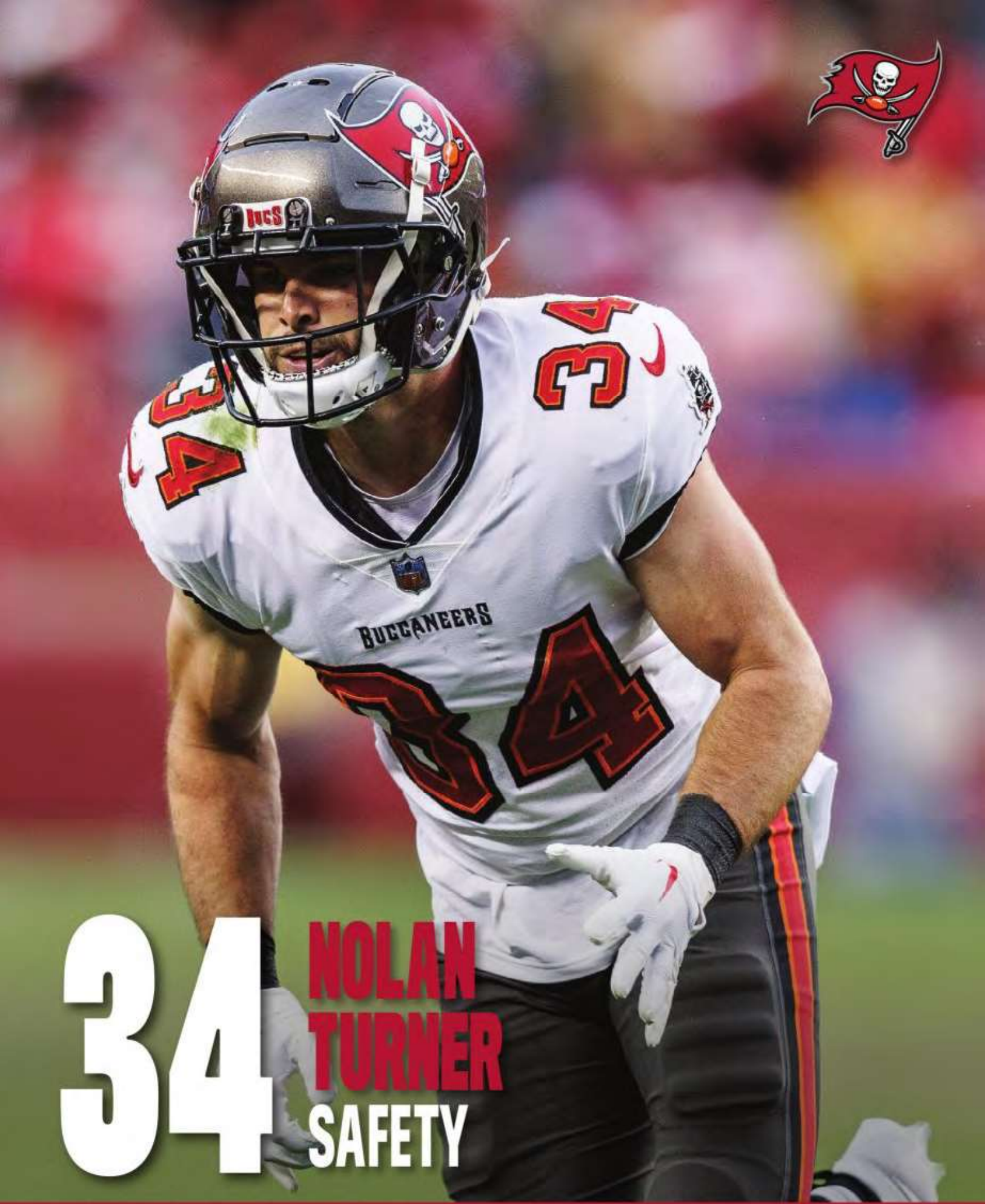

34 NOLAN TURNER
SAFETY

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 202 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Clemson • **HOMETOWN:** Vestavia Hills, AL

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35 JAMEL DEAN
CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 206 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** Auburn • **HOMETOWN:** Cocoa, FL

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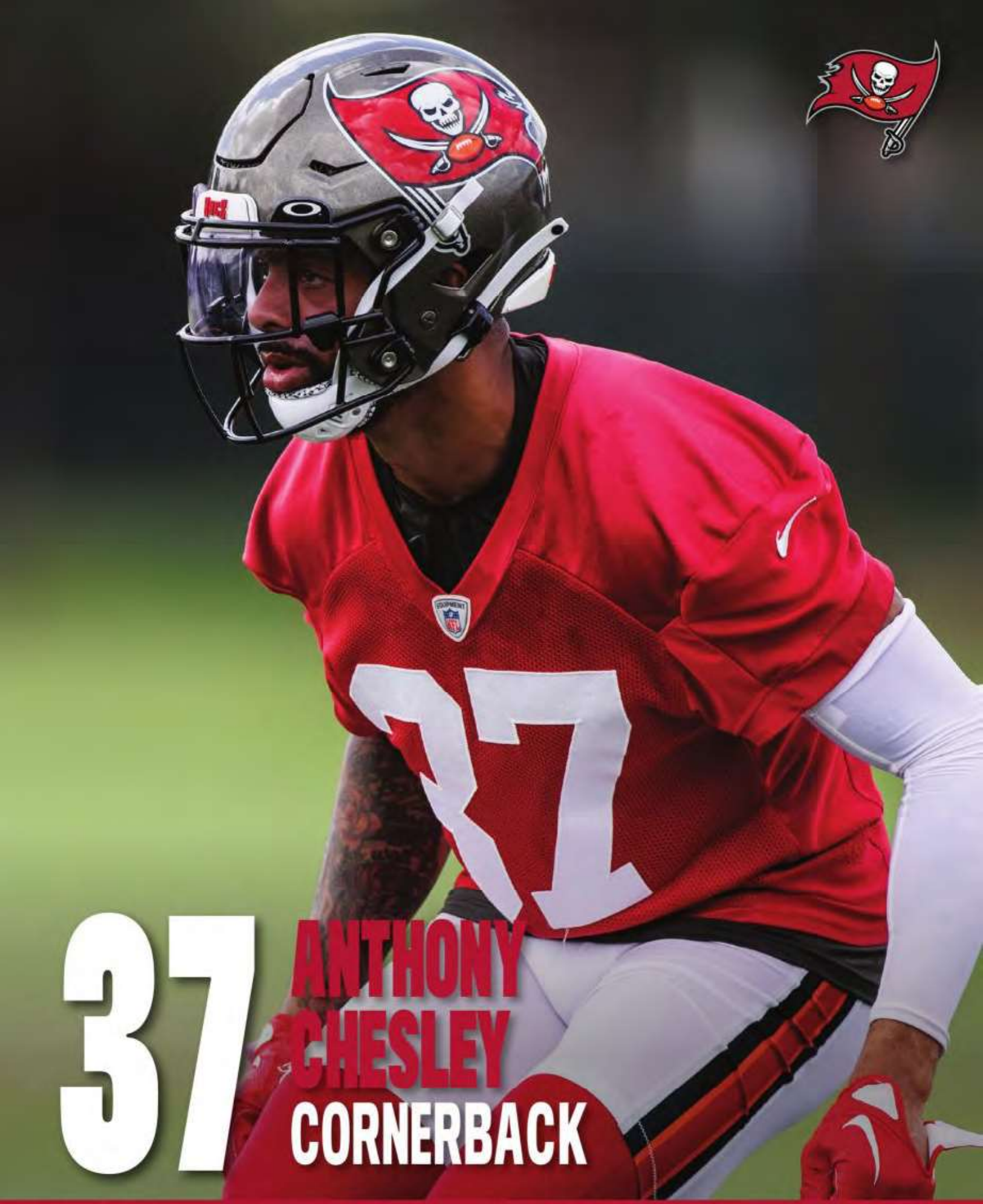

37 ANTHONY CHESLEY

CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 190 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Coastal Carolina • **HOMETOWN:** Temple Hills, MD

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41 KO KIEFT
TIGHT END

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 265 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Minnesota • **HOMETOWN:** Sioux Center, IA

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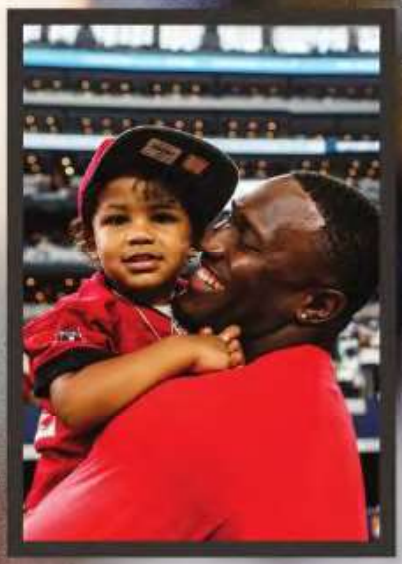

45 DEVIN WHITE
LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 237 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** LSU • **HOMETOWN:** Springhill, LA

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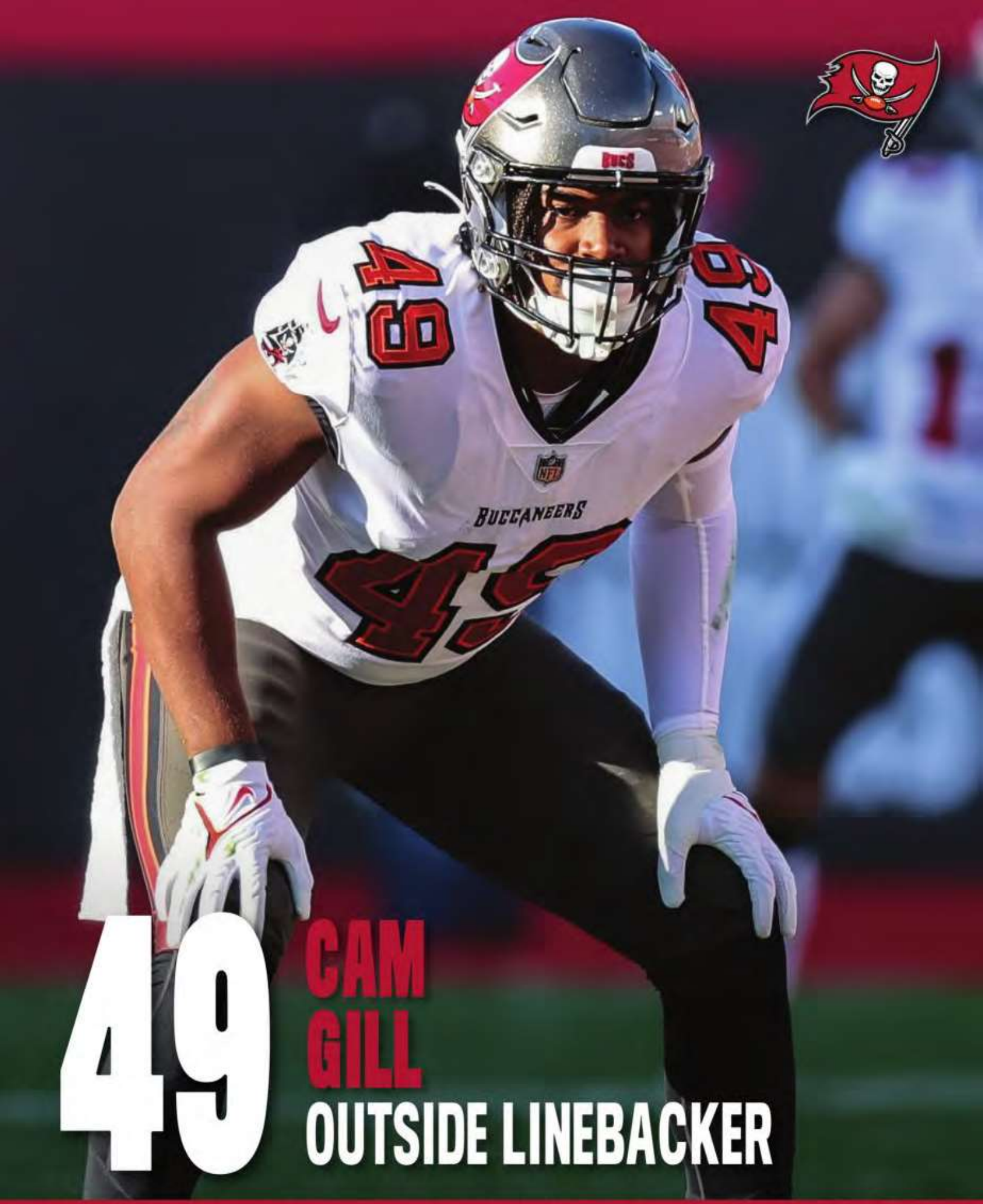

49 CAM GILL

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 240 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Wagner • **HOMETOWN:** Douglasville, GA

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50 VITA VEA

NOSE TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-4 • **WEIGHT:** 347 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 6 • **COLLEGE:** Washington • **HOMETOWN:** Milpitas, CA

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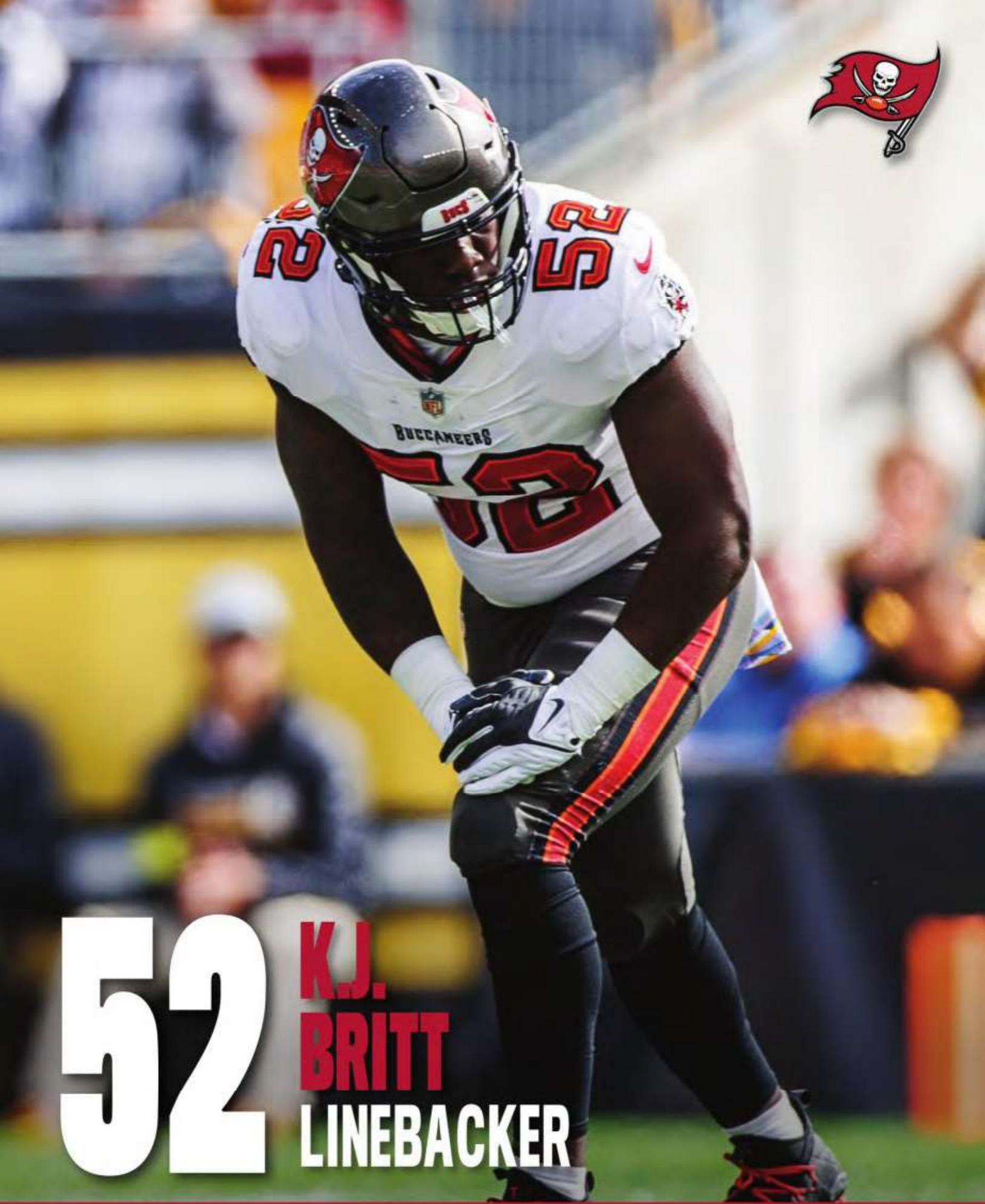

52 K.J. BRITT
LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 235 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Auburn • **HOMETOWN:** Oxford, AL

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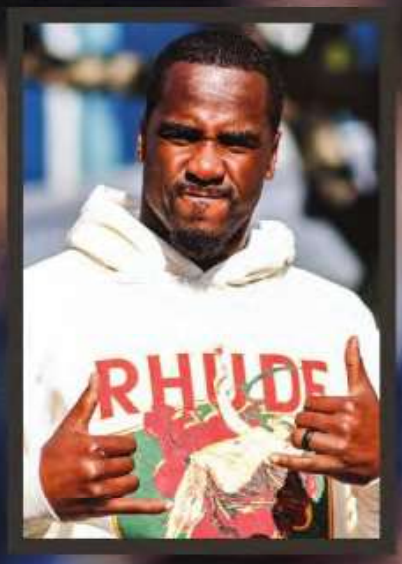

54 LAVONTE DAVID
LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 233 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 12 • **COLLEGE:** Nebraska • **HOMETOWN:** Miami, FL

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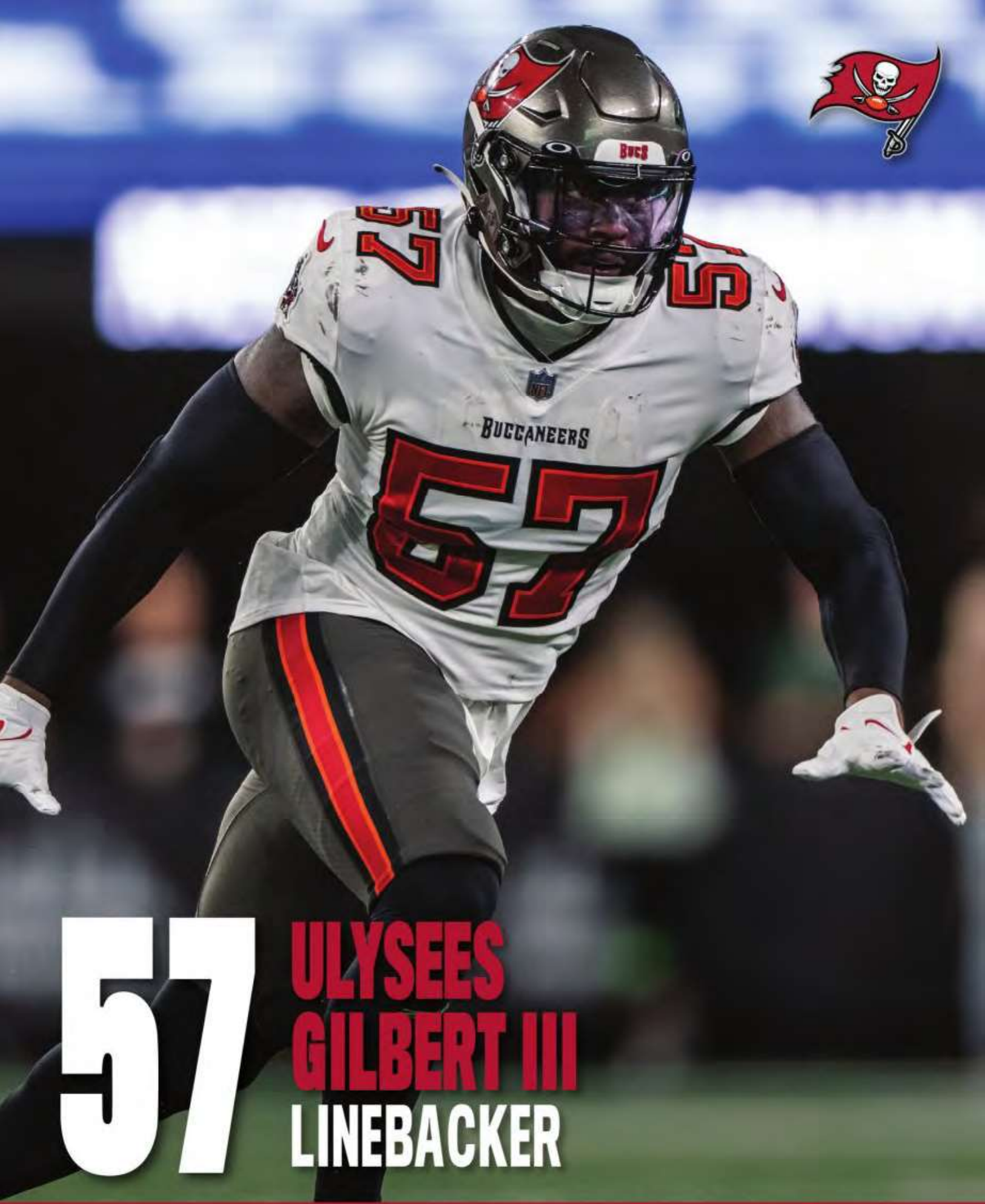

57 ULYSEES GILBERT III

LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 230 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Akron • **HOMETOWN:** Ocala, FL

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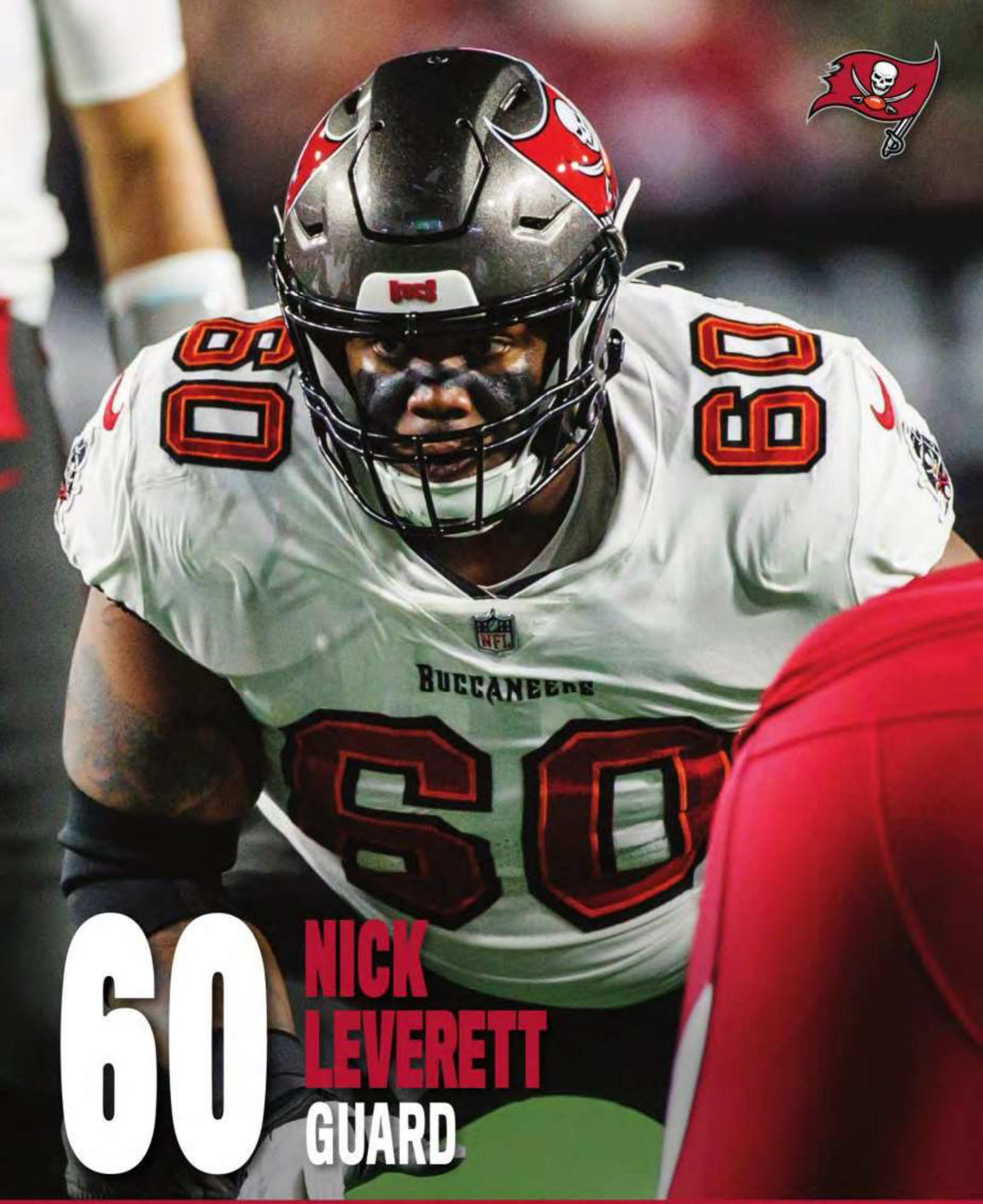

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 310 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Rice • **HOMETOWN:** Salisbury, NC

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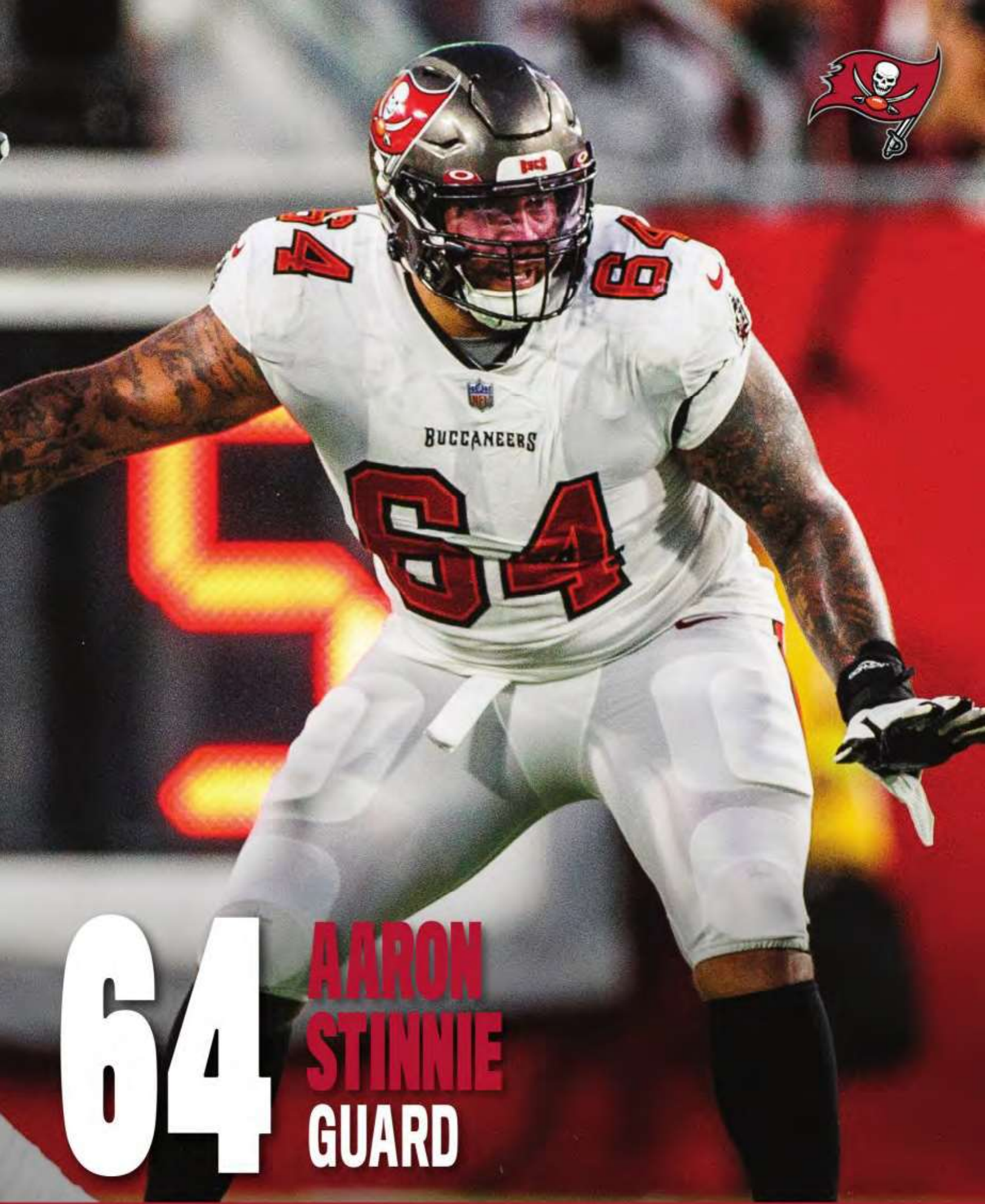

64 AARON STINNIE
GUARD

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 312 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 6 • **COLLEGE:** James Madison • **HOMETOWN:** Charlottesville, VA

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66 RYAN JENSEN

CENTER

HEIGHT: 6-4 • **WEIGHT:** 319 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 10 • **COLLEGE:** Colorado State-Pueblo • **HOMETOWN:** Fort Morgan, CO

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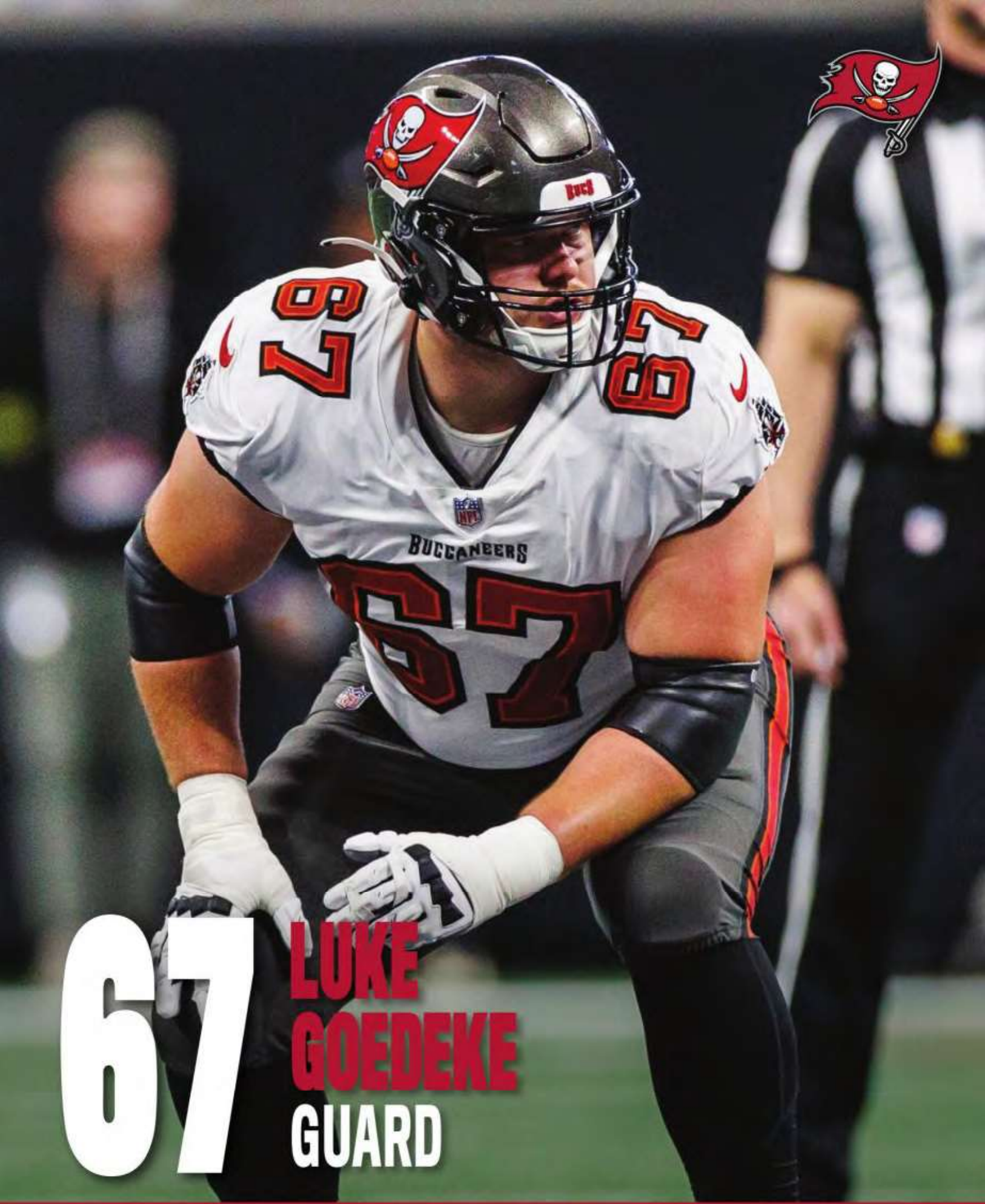

67 LUKE GOEDEKE

GUARD

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 312 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Central Michigan • **HOMETOWN:** Whitelaw, WI

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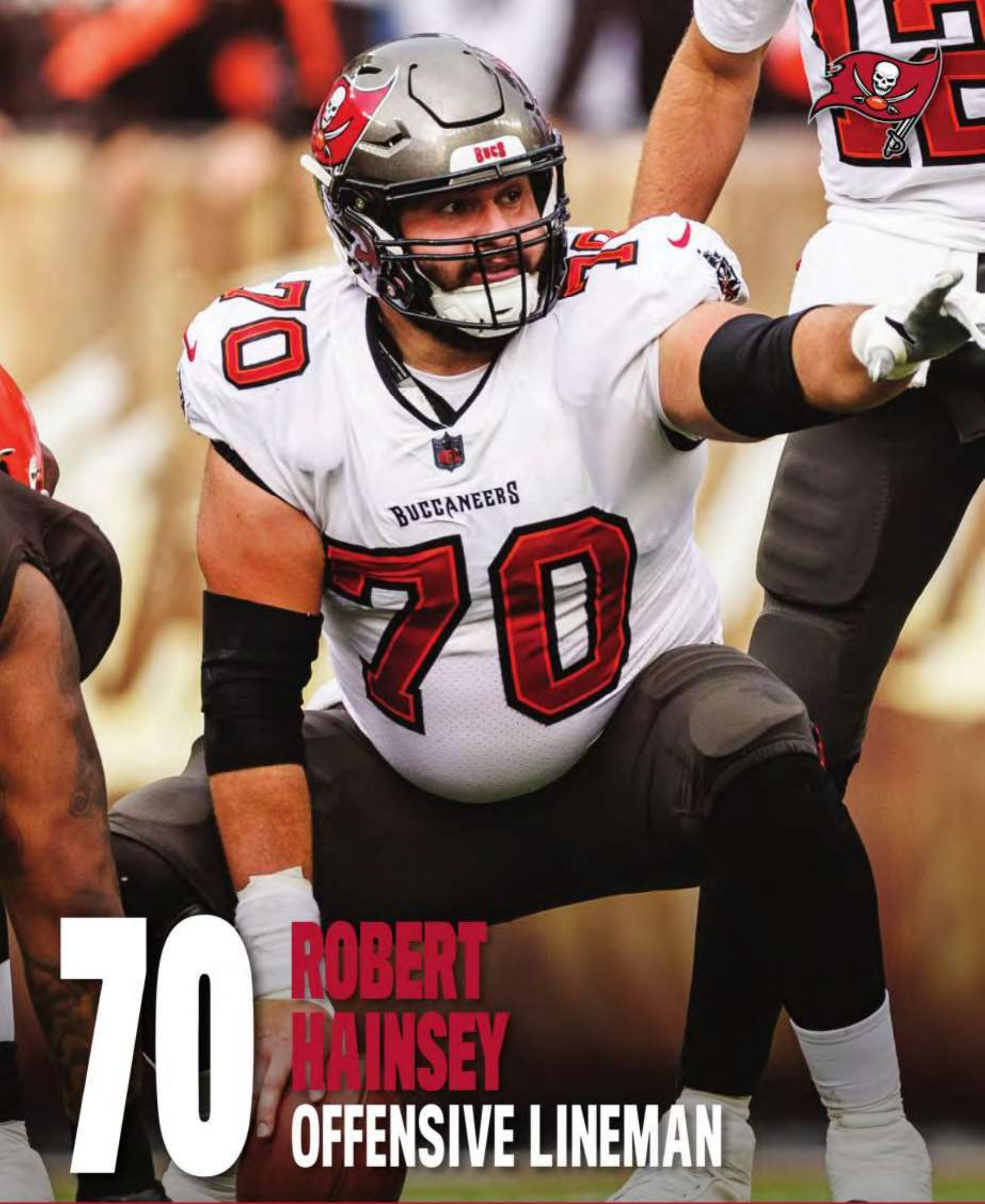

70 ROBERT HAINSEY

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-4 • **WEIGHT:** 306 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** Notre Dame • **HOMETOWN:** Pittsburgh, PA

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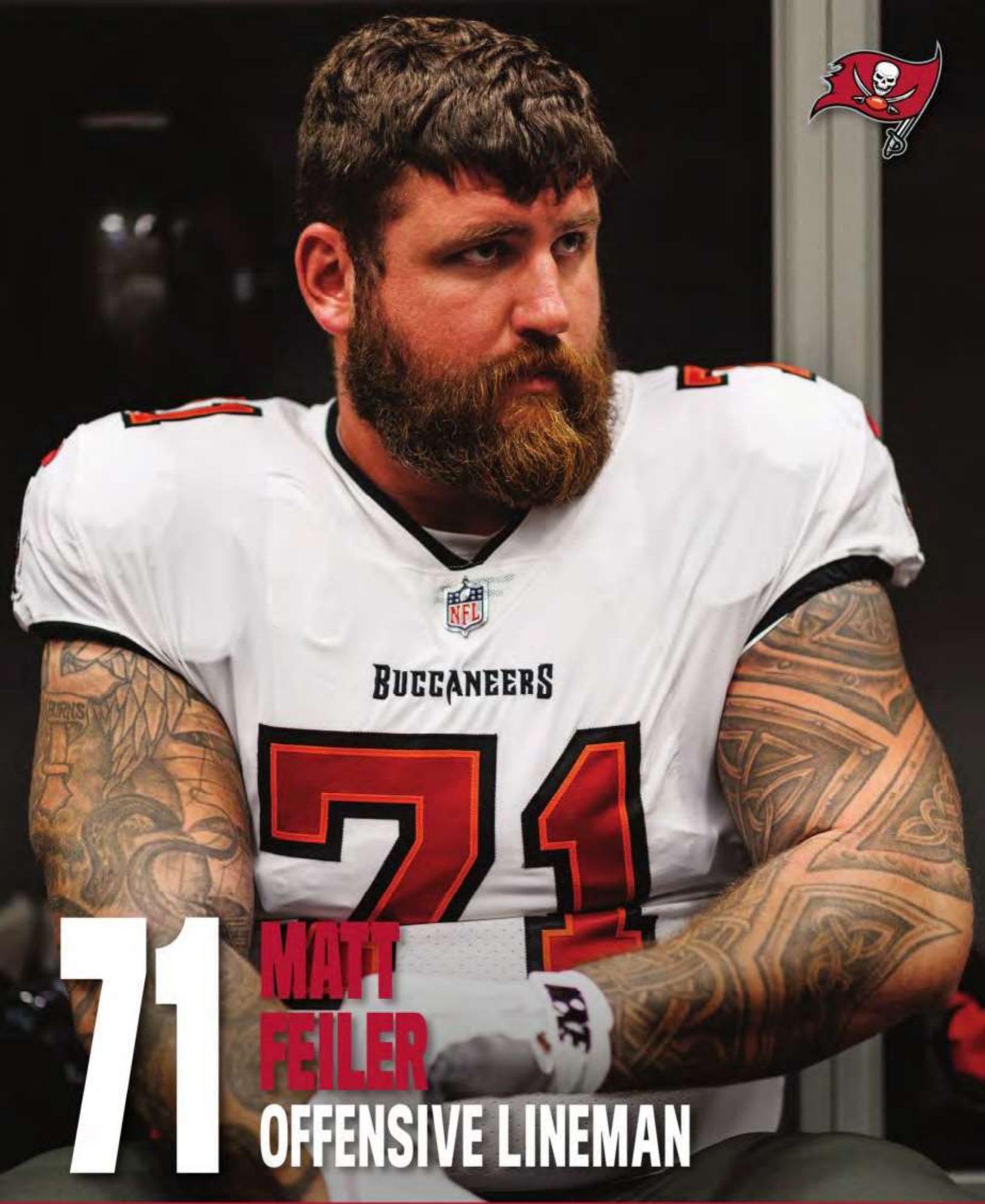

71 MATT FEILER

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 330 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 7 • **COLLEGE:** Bloomsburg • **HOMETOWN:** Strasburg, PA

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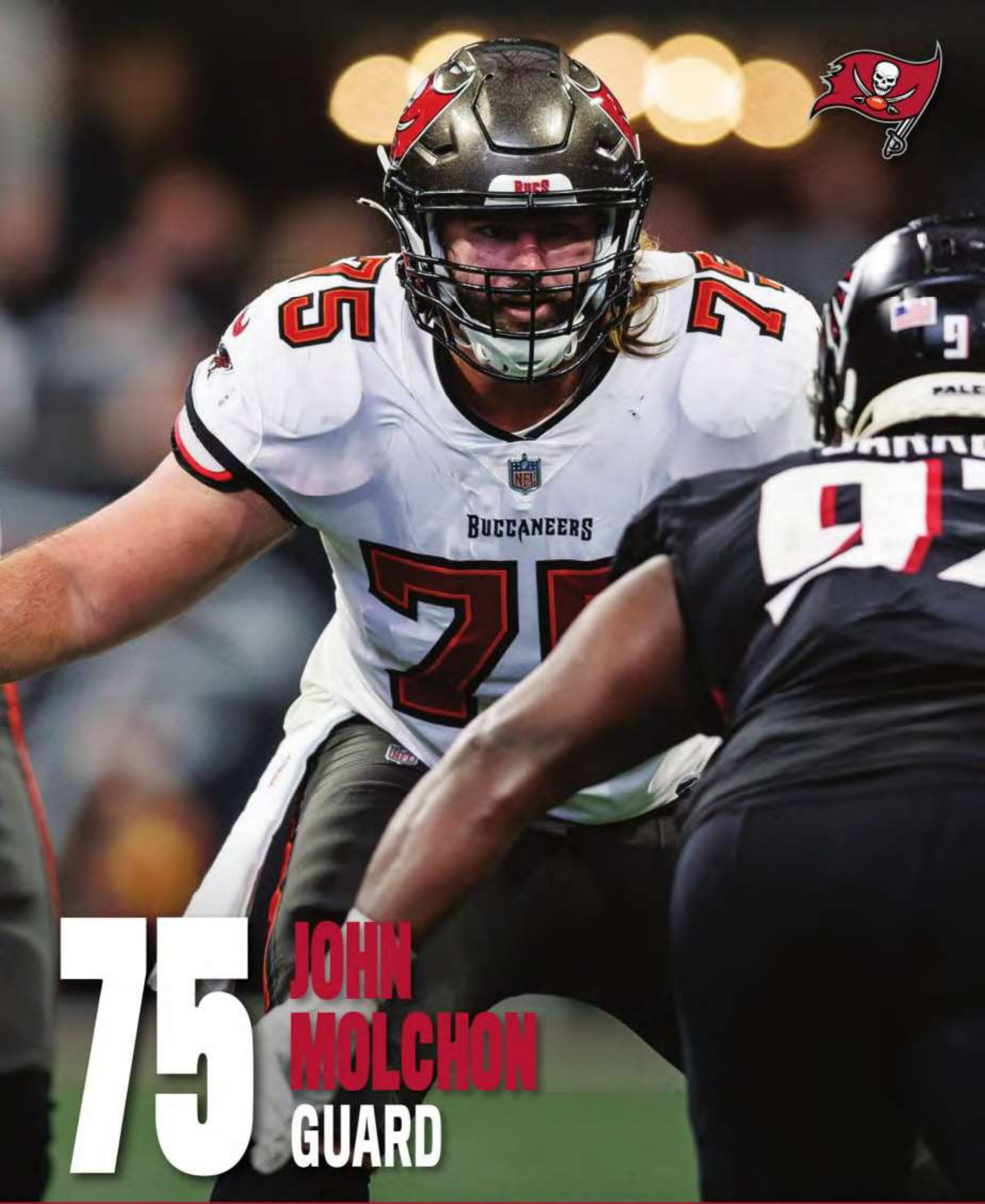

75 JOHN MOLCHON
GUARD

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 309 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Boise State • **HOMETOWN:** Las Vegas, NV

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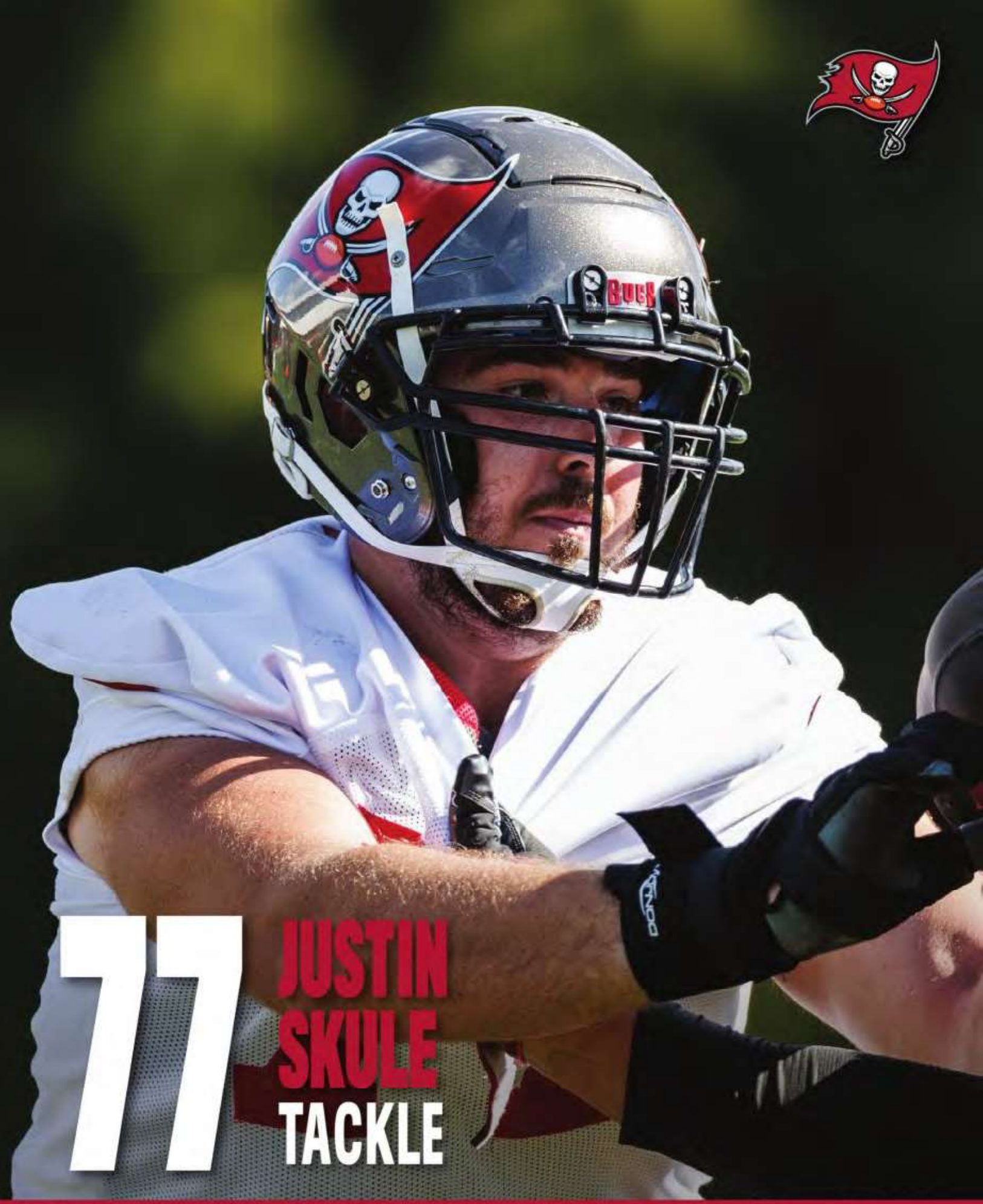

77 JUSTIN SKULE
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 315 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Vanderbilt • **HOMETOWN:** Clifton, VA

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78 TRISTAN WIRFS
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 320 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 4 • **COLLEGE:** Iowa • **HOMETOWN:** Mount Vernon, IA

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79 PATRICK O'CONNOR

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-4 • **WEIGHT:** 270 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** Eastern Michigan • **HOMETOWN:** Chicago, IL

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83 DEVEN THOMPKINS

WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 5-8 • **WEIGHT:** 155 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Utah State • **HOMETOWN:** Fort Myers, FL

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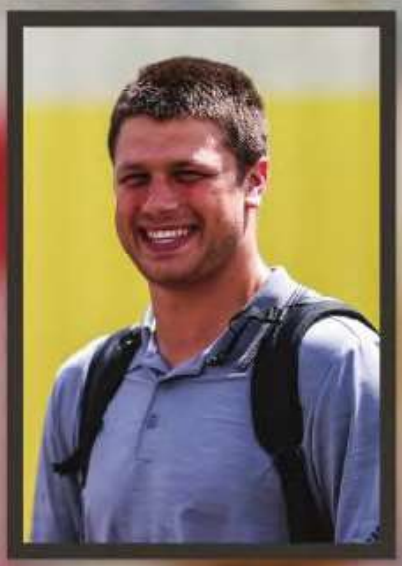

88 CADE OTTON

TIGHT END

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 247 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Washington • **HOMETOWN:** Tumwater, WA

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CADE OTTON FINDS RESILIENCY AMIDST TRAGIC LOSS

By Brianna Dix

In this year's 'My Cause My Cleats' campaign, Buccaneers' rookie tight end Cade Otton is representing the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research in honor of his late mother, Sally Waterstradt Otton.

44 seconds. No timeouts. Down 13-9 against the Los Angeles Rams in Week Nine, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers needed to drive 60 yards. From first-and-goal with 13 seconds on the clock, the ball was snapped, and running back Leonard Fournette motioned to the left side of the formation as quarterback Tom Brady faked a handoff. Tight end Cade Otton chipped the linebacker, giving the illusion of a run, which deceived the Rams' bunch formation, drawing eyes. Instantaneously, Otton pivoted and turned his body around to catch a perfectly timed pass out of the flat, resulting in a wide-open path to the end zone – encapsulating football in true, thrilling fashion. Capping off a well-oiled drive, Otton, sealed the victory at Raymond James Stadium. That moment in his rookie season will forever be etched in Otton's brain, not for the accolade itself but for the person he knew was watching it unfold from above.

...

Otton sat down at the AdventHealth Training Facility, faced with a juxtaposition of events – a day removed from that momentous occasion in his career and a week past burying his mother, Sally Boettger Waterstradt Otton, who passed away suddenly at the age of 50. She had battled Parkinson's disease for over a decade, exemplifying strength amidst the pernicious diagnosis.

In 2010, news came that shattered Cade's carefree childhood. The words 'degenerative,' 'progressive' and 'no-cure' pervaded his thoughts and became the main headline to a recurring nightmare. His mother, a mom of three, a triathlete and a longtime physical education teacher in Olympia, Washington, would endure a debilitating battle. The first sign was a small muscle tremor. Inconceivably at 11 years old, Cade's life turned upside down in a single instant.

"My mom was just sitting on the couch with my dad and her big toe was just wiggling a little bit. She said, 'Come look at this!' We thought it was kind of weird, so we took her to the doctor to see what was happening. We had no clue that it would be a diagnosis like that. Once she got the diagnosis, I started to learn a lot of things and just researched what the disease entailed. We all cried for a day, but my mom was just so determined to just keep moving forward and to be happy about the things she could do."

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disorder that affects the nervous system and parts of the body controlled by nerves. It occurs when brain cells that create dopamine – a chemical that coordinates movement – either stop working altogether or die. Symptoms and side effects vary from person to person based on severity. They start slowly and progress over time. Tremors are common but the disease can also cause stiffness or slowing of movement. In addition to tremors, other signs include impaired posture and balance, loss of automatic movements and speech and writing

changes. There is no cure for Parkinson's but there are medications that can improve quality of life, reduce symptoms and provide therapy short-term.

The prevalent disease does not discriminate, and estimations suggest that nearly one million people in the Unites States and more than six million people worldwide are affected by Parkinson's. For Cade's mom, the first symptom was a noticeable tremor, allowing her to still perform her usual tasks and routine as an athlete. However, as time progressed and the disease strengthened in her frail body, the motor skills diminished.

"At the point she was diagnosed, she was still running, competing in triathlons, and was doing everything she would usually do. As time went on, motor skills got taken away and mobility and stuff like that. Towards the end of her life, she was not able to go on runs as much or drive, but she always found joy in the little things she could do. That is such a testament to her and her character."

"SHE ALWAYS FOUND JOY IN THE LITTLE THINGS SHE COULD DO. THAT IS SUCH A TESTAMENT TO HER AND HER CHARACTER."

Despite facing a grueling deterioration process that would make most capitulate, Sally Otton chose uninhibited thankfulness. Instead of dwelling on what would not be, she focused on what she did have. With her trademark optimism, gratitude was sustainable. Her acceptance of the disorder did not mean defeat or resignation, but the contrary, allowing peace to permeate and perspective to embolden. Living with the condition did not break her, and instead, Sally stayed true to herself as the disease took its toll physically. The joy she radiated and the courageous spirit she embodied inspired her family. Circumstances do not define character but reveal it, bearing one's true soul.

"As her kid, she never let us know what she was going through. She was always just so joyful and was always doing just whatever she could to help and support us. That was all the way up until the end of her life. She was just such a trooper and always powered through what she was going through for her family."

On September 20, 2022, devastation struck. Cade's mother passed away – a day forever entrenched in his mind. Sorrow inhabited his body and founded a new host. At the exact moment Cade received the desolating phone call from his father, he was at a car dealership looking for a second vehicle with his wife Sierra Otton. In that brief millisecond, a pastime engendered a smile on Cade's face as he anxiously awaited a conversation with his mother about their purchase.

"It's funny because I was with my mom when we got my high school car [Mazda 3]. That was something she always loved to do – negotiate. I had not told her we were at the dealership yet and I was really looking forward to telling her, 'Mom, I negotiated this car and got a deal.' So, we were just about to start, and my dad gave me a call and let me know. It's one of those things you will never forget, and it leaves a pit in your stomach. I have so many things that remind me of her, and I was thinking about her in that moment."

Dealing with loss is similar to the effects of an earthquake. The first mainshock hits, leaving behind destruction as the world crumbles. After, as a rebuild commences to piece back together the shambles, aftershocks arrive unexpectantly. The latter evokes a reaction as memories swarm without warning.

The ensuing day after the tragic phone call, Cade got on a flight with his wife to be with family. The Bucs provided as much time as Cade needed to grapple with the loss of his mother and mourn with loved ones. There is no set formula on dealing with gut-wrenching loss and for Cade, he relied on his faith and family as a coping mechanism to work through the myriad of thoughts and emotions that consumed.

"Not a lot of words could be said but I just needed to be with family. We cried together and that is kind of what those next few days looked like. I am so thankful that I had my wife with me that night and on the plane ride. Those things that rock you to your core, you just have to rely on your foundational beliefs, and I relied on my faith and my family, that is what got me through."

After Cade returned to the field, he began inscribing a few of his mother's signature phrases on his wrist-tape to commemorate her meaningful life and vivacious spirit. Prior to games growing up or on Facetime in recent years, Sally religiously used the same messages. Even though he can no longer physically hear those cherished words, every time Cade steps onto the field donning a Buccaneer 88 jersey, her memory provides a compass for his life.

"Every game I have been writing phrases she would say on my wrist-tape. She would always say, 'Have fun. Love you. Be safe.' I just try to write little memories of her on my wrist so I can look at that and have some perspective. I just love to think of her during those times."

As Cade reflected on the past, he adjusted in his chair, attempting to quantify the unequivocal influence of his mother. While he vocalized Sally's loving attributes, his voice quivered, and his eyes gleamed with tears.

"I just think about how she loved to laugh. She would always do whatever it took to make someone else happy. I have these memories of going into my mom and dad's room to say goodnight. Usually, it would not even be anything and me and my mom would just start giggling. My dad would just sit there confused, 'Like, what are you guys talking about?' She just exuded so much joy all the time and another thing about her is she is an awesome competitor. She competed in triathlons and ran half- marathons and stuff. My dad's a football coach, my grandpa was a football coach, but my mom was a really awesome athlete and was such a supportive mom. She was truly great at whatever she did and a lot of times, it was just being a friend, supporting us in whatever we did as her children.

"In my sport and in my job, I just want to do the best I can to exude joy like she did. Also, just compete like she did. Also, family wise, to love unconditionally and to support unconditionally like she always did, and I think about her every day and how I can best do that."

The gridiron runs in Cade's veins, a part of his fabric growing up in Tumwater. He played for his grandfather, legendary high school football coach Sid Otton. Sid coached for 49 seasons and is the all-time winningest coach in state history, including six state championships. Cade's father, Tim Otton, was the defensive coordinator at Tumwater under Sid. His uncle Brad was a two-year starting quarterback at USC and went undrafted in the 1997 NFL Draft before signing with the (then) Washington Redskins. Football became instilled in Cade at a young age as he absorbed X's and O's chatter daily. Over time, the nuances clicked. The sport became a source of joy for the family and is now a sanctuary to channel grief.

Cade, the Buccaneers' fourth-round draft pick out of the University of Washington, has quickly learned an NFL playbook, which dives into a culmination of route breakdowns and defensive coverage adjustments. Earning the trust of future Hall of fame quarterback and reverse-aging marvel Tom Brady is no easy feat. However, Brady has looked to Otton often – a rarity for a first-year tight end. Historically, it is uncommon for a rookie at the position to make an immediate impact. Going from the collegiate game – where players either serve as essentially a large slot receiver or solely an in-line blocker – to the intricacies of the pro level, usually requires a lengthy acclimation period.

"The connection with Tom, that is hard, and that connection really comes in games," Cade's tight end coach John Van Dam described. "You can make some catches in practice that earn his trust, but when you go out there and make tough catches for him on gameday, that is just time on task. You can't really do that in practice. It has to be live reps. He has obviously been able to build his trust and is continuing to do that, being in the right place at the right time and finishing with the ball in his hands. He has done a great job of that... He is going to give you every single thing he's got on gameday, which is really all you can ask for out of somebody. He is smart, he is tough, he is dependable – which are three qualities that I think are important to have success in this league for a long time.

"There were a couple of plays this past week in Germany back-to-back. One play was when Tom audibled or checked the other way and Cade was supposed to pull. Anyway, he had a mental error. He screwed up and did not do it. He knows he did not do and failed to execute. A lot of guys, especially rookies, would beat themselves up or crumble about it and it would affect the next play. Well, the next play, Cade made a great read and had a great block on the linebacker, and we sprung a run for 10 yards. When he came off, we were talking about it and I said, 'Hey, you just can't let a bad play turn into multiple bad plays.' He was able to forget about it and move on and be great on the next play. To me, that shows a lot of maturity."

Despite missing the Week Three game against Green Bay to grieve alongside his family, Cade led all rookie tight ends in receptions and receiving yards following Week Nine after recording five receptions for 68 yards (career-high) against the defending Super Bowl champs. As a catch-point finisher and disciplined route-runner, Cade is a dynamic threat that has solidified the Bucs' aerial attack. As a prototypical 'Y' tight end for Tampa Bay, Cade possesses body control to track and extend outside of his frame without breaking stride and is an accomplished in-line blocker, holding point in the run game. As Cade strives to cement his own legacy in the NFL with the Bucs, he is propelled by his mother's imprint.

"When you grow up your whole life and your mom is watching you play and then she is not there, there are different things and a different mindset that I am sure were going on within him, but he handled it as best as he could and has showed up every day," John Van Dam stated. "His maturity level definitely shined throughout that process, but it is still ongoing."

During the league's annual 'My Cause My Cleats' campaign, highlighting impassioned player commitments to charitable causes that serve as catalysts in the community, Cade has chosen to represent the Michael J. Fox Foundation in honor of Sally. The goal is to eradicate Parkinson's and provide short-term alleviations for an improved quality of life for patients enduring the devastating disorder.

"The goal is to illuminate Parkinson's disease and to find a cure, ultimately. The [Michael J. Fox Foundation] wants to put themselves out of business. I think that is really cool. My mom and dad both worked with them and really liked the experience with how they worked with patients. They take calculated risks with different medications and clinical trials and my mom was one of the patients who was just willing to do those things in order to help further the cause. So, that is something that I will be passionate about going forward, working with them and trying to find a cure for Parkinson's."

Coordinating with the narrowed initiative has provided an outlet for Cade to help families who share a mirrored hardship. He will continue to use his platform to cultivate change and optimize growth through the Michael J. Fox Foundation to slow the progression of Parkinson's. Cade will strive to be the person his mom encompassed. To those who knew Sally, she would be described as someone who fiercely loved and prioritized family; one who seldom spoke of her own struggles or fears that accompanied the degradation process but encouraged so that Cade could one day accomplish his dream. She built the foundation that Cade will manifest as he embarks on his NFL journey. Her presence and personification of resiliency have become the driving force behind Cade's ascension.

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89 DAVID WELLS

TIGHT END

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 260 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 3 • **COLLEGE:** San Diego State • **HOMETOWN:** Clovis, CA

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90 LOGAN HALL

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 283 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2 • **COLLEGE:** Houston • **HOMETOWN:** Belton, TX

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92 WILLIAM GHOLSTON
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 281 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 11 • **COLLEGE:** Michigan State • **HOMETOWN:** Detroit, MI

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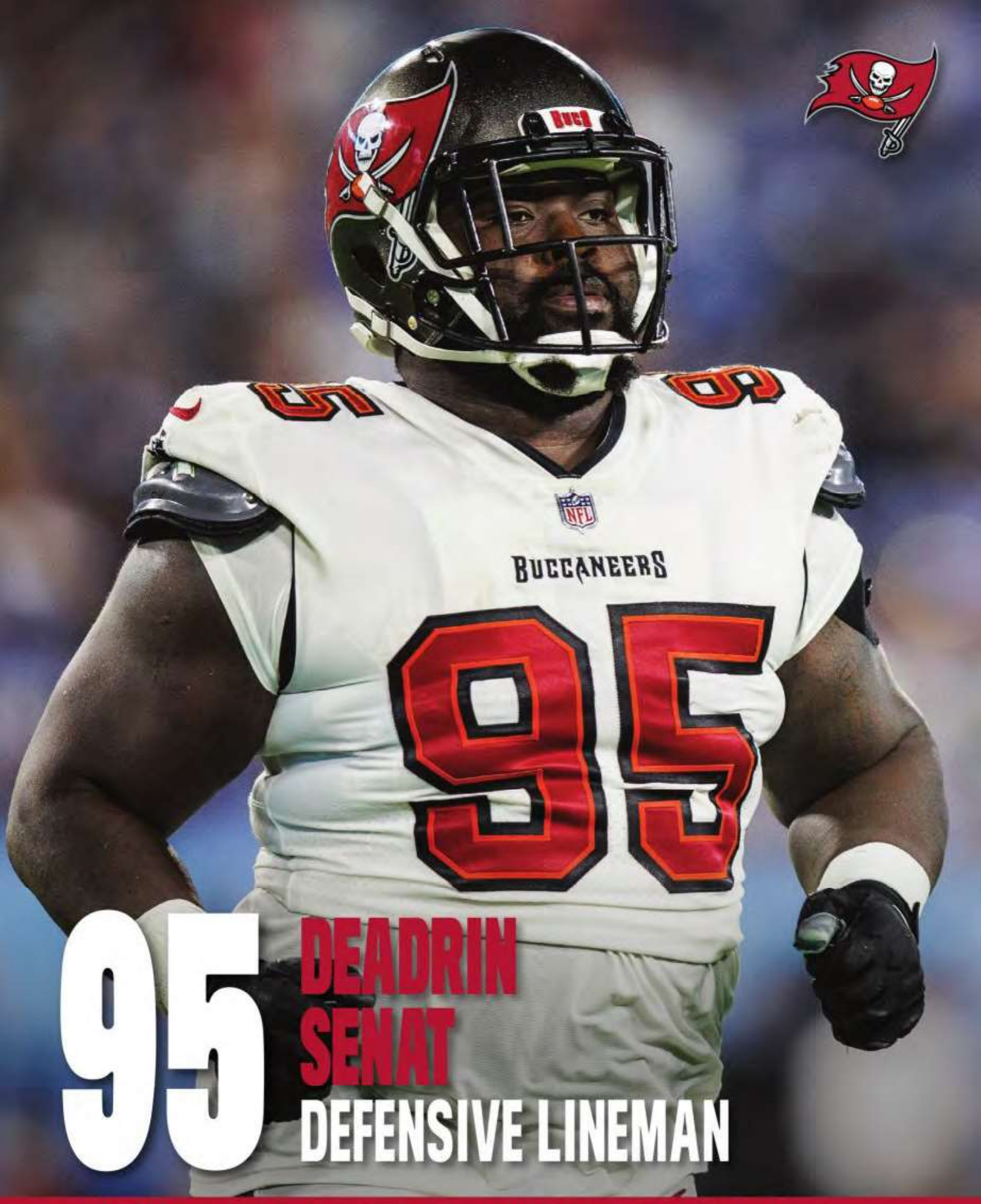

95 DEADRIN SENAT

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 305 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** USF • **HOMETOWN:** Immokalee, FL

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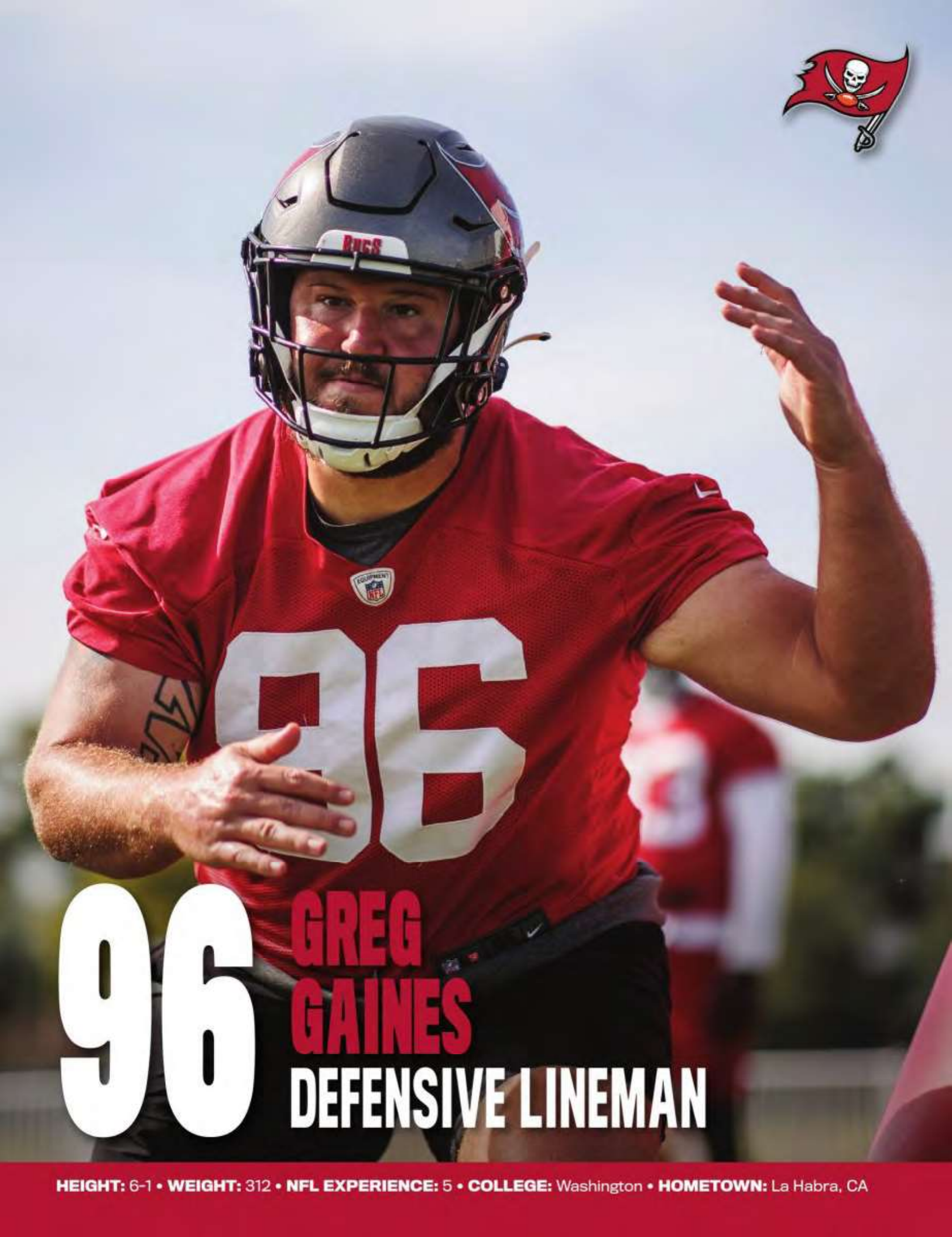

96 GREG GAINES

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 312 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** Washington • **HOMETOWN:** La Habra, CA

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97 ZACH TRINER

LONG SNAPPER

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 245 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** Assumption • **HOMETOWN:** Marshfield, MA

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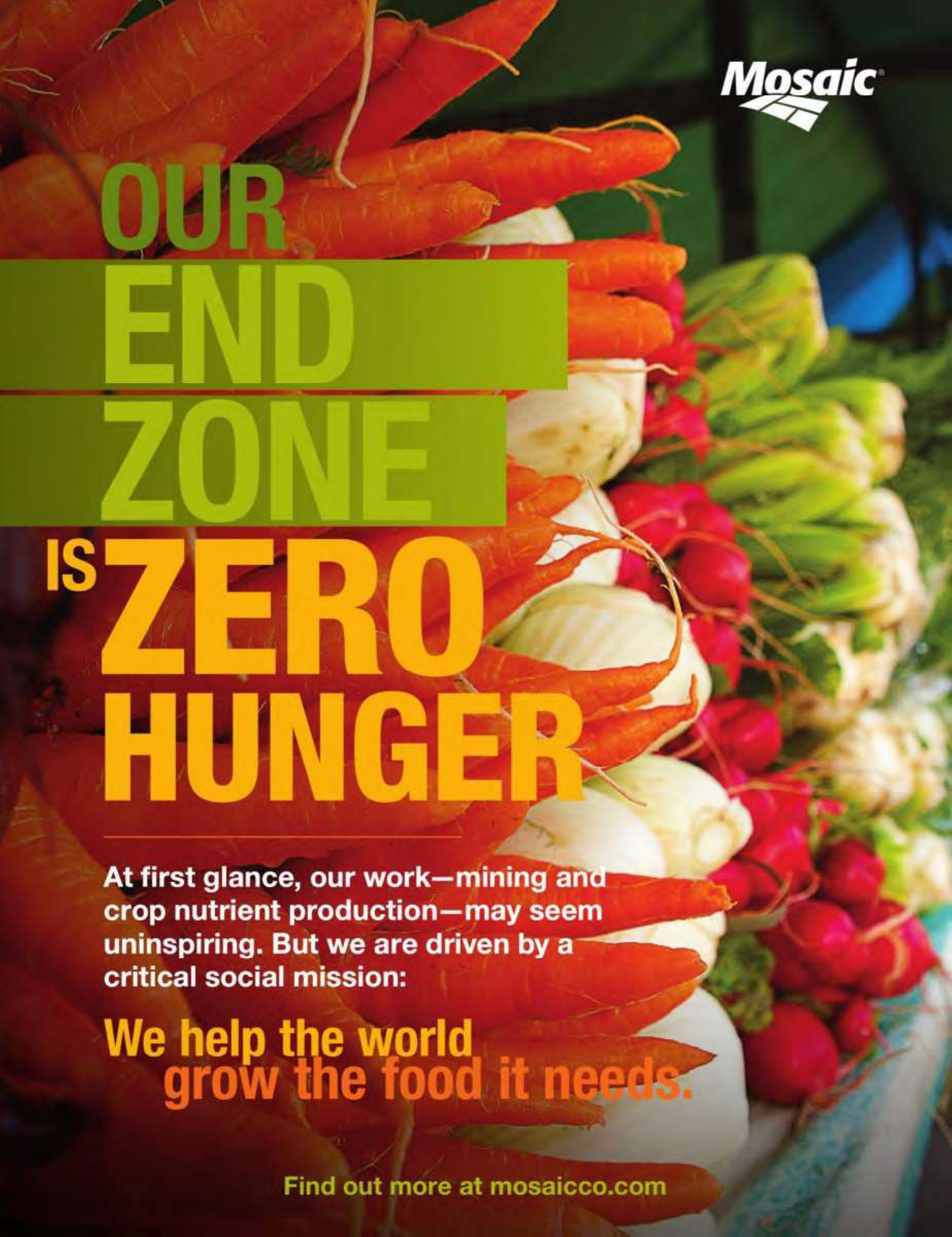
USA TODAY SPORTS

98 ANTHONY NELSON

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-7 • **WEIGHT:** 271 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 5 • **COLLEGE:** Iowa • **HOMETOWN:** Urbandale, IA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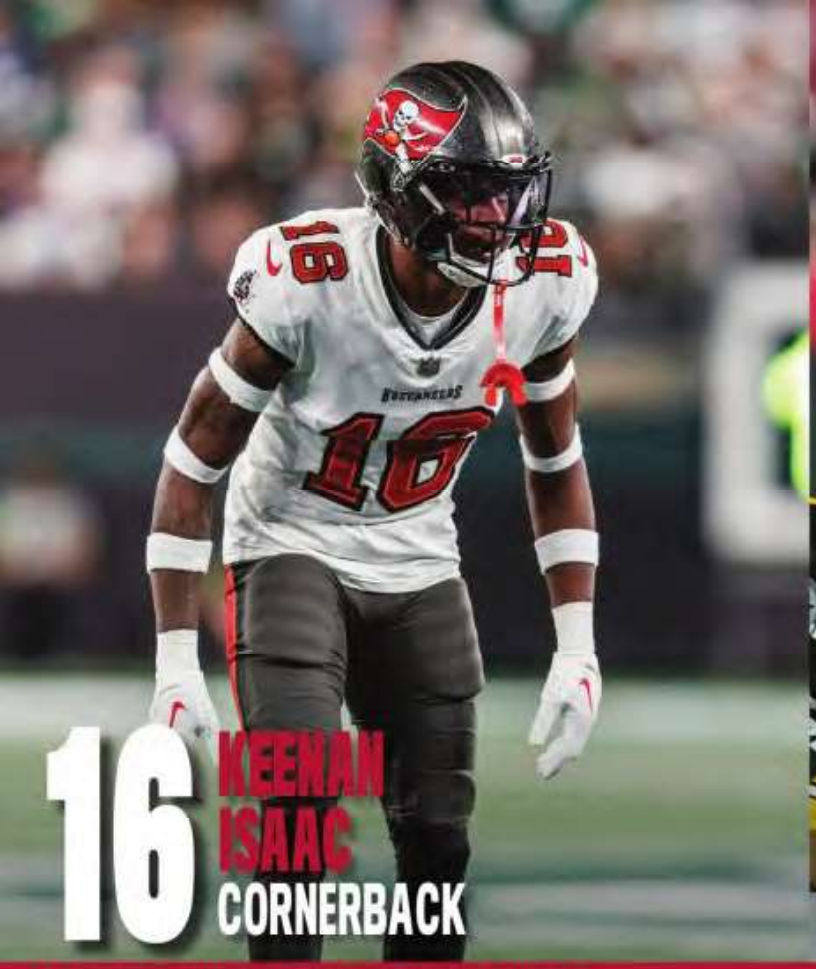

16 KEENAN ISAAC
CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 210 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Alabama State • **HOMETOWN:** Midfield, AL

17 TAYE BARBER
WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 5-10 • **WEIGHT:** 190 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: TCU • **HOMETOWN:** Cypress, TX

18 RAKIM JARRETT
WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 192 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Maryland • **HOMETOWN:** Palmer Park, MD

25 KEDRICK WHITEHEAD JR.
SAFETY

HEIGHT: 5-11 • **WEIGHT:** 195 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Delaware • **HOMETOWN:** Middletown, DE

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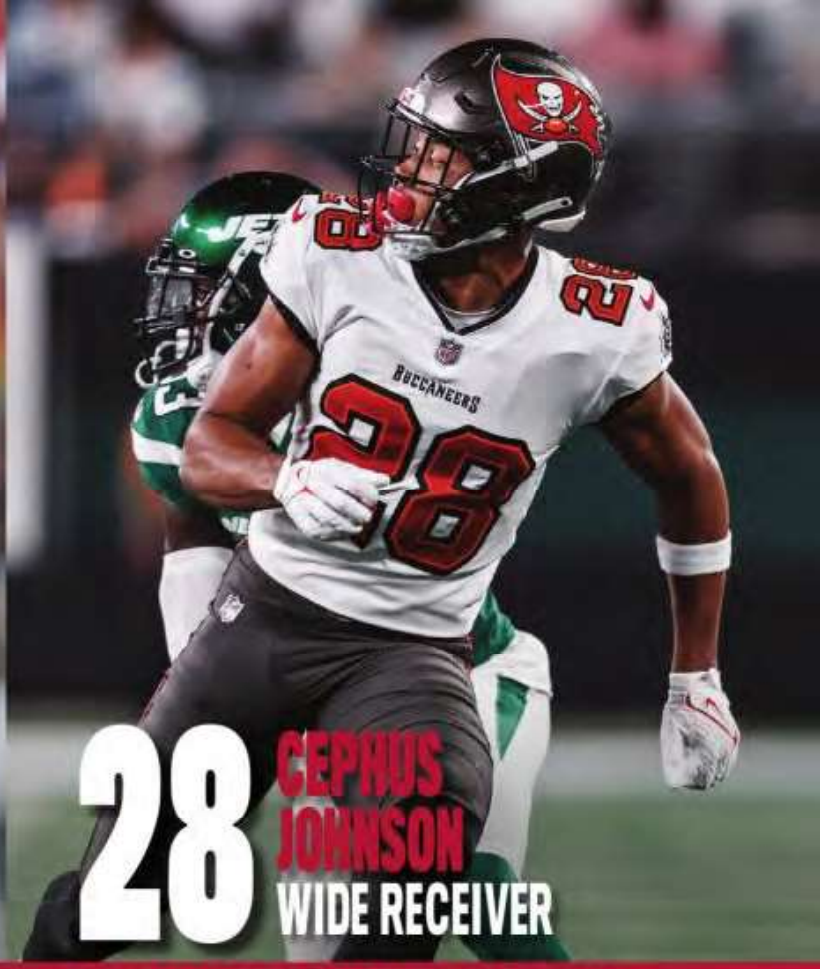
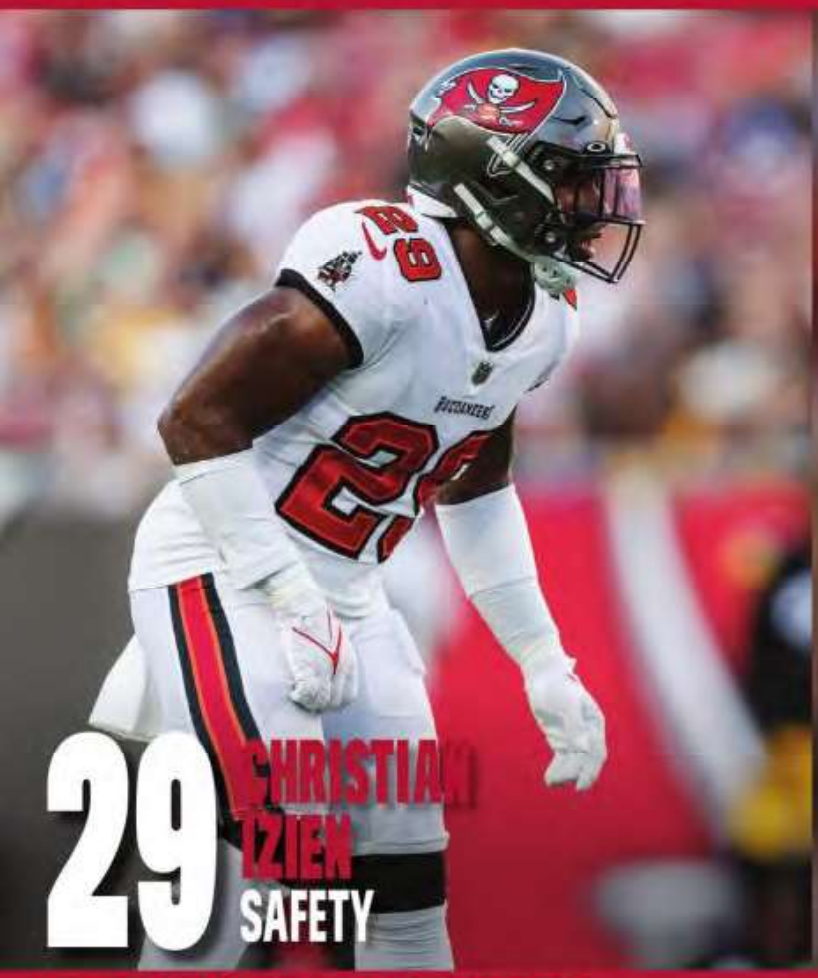
26 KAEVON MERRIWEATHER
SAFETY

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 212 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Iowa • **HOMETOWN:** Belleville, MI



28 CEPHUS JOHNSON
WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 220 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Southeastern Louisiana • **HOMETOWN:** Mobile, AL



29 CHRISTIAN IZIEN
SAFETY

HEIGHT: 5-10 • **WEIGHT:** 200 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Rutgers • **HOMETOWN:** Far Rockaway, NY

36 DON GARDNER
CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 180 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: South Dakota State • **HOMETOWN:** Chicago, IL

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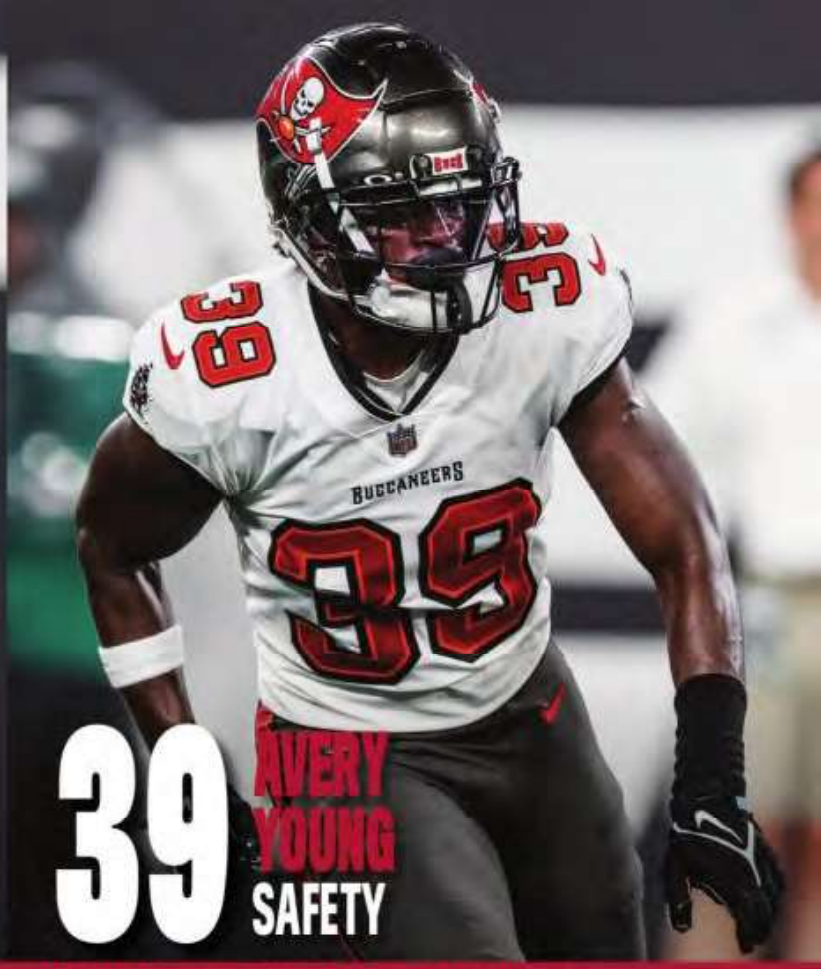
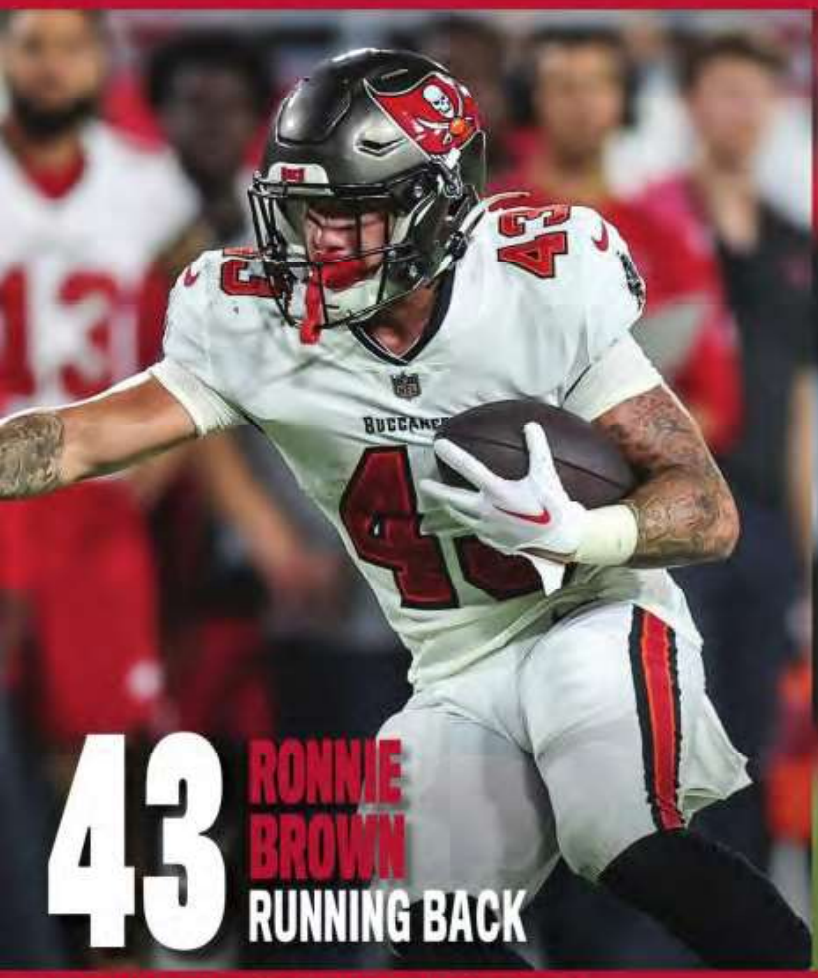
38 DERREK PITTS JR.
CORNERBACK

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 193 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: North Carolina State • **HOMETOWN:** Dunbar, WV



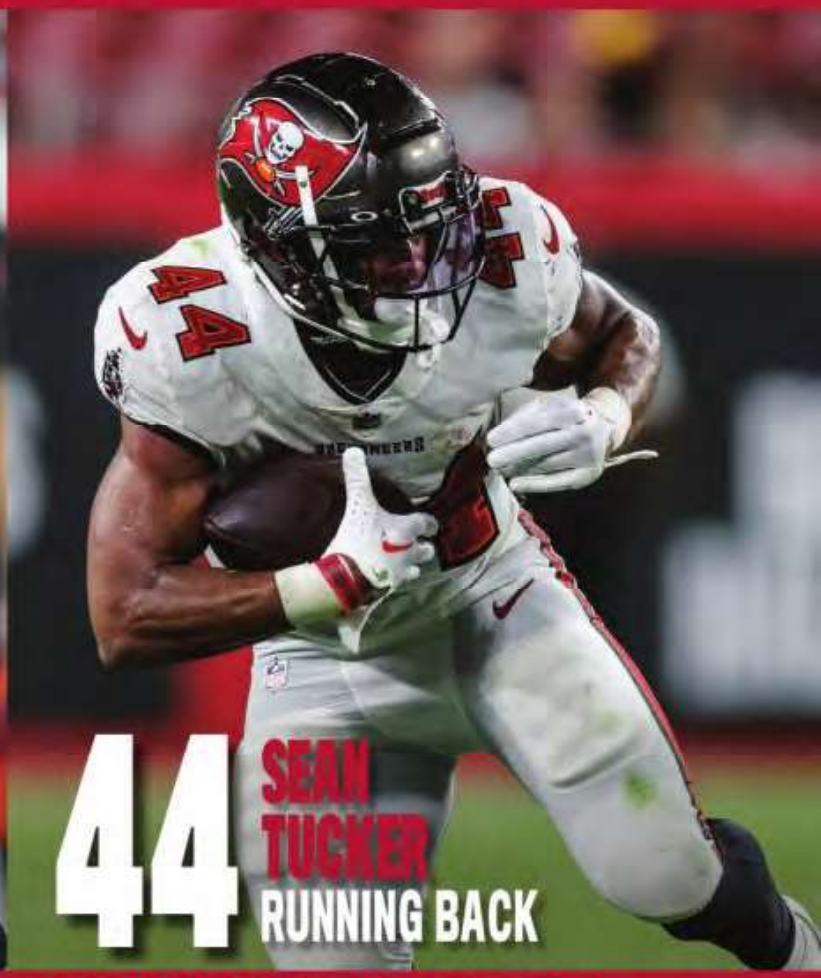
39 AVERY YOUNG
SAFETY

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 198 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Rutgers • **HOMETOWN:** Coatesville, PA



43 RONNIE BROWN
RUNNING BACK

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 190 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Shepherd • **HOMETOWN:** Baltimore, MD



44 SEAN TUCKER
RUNNING BACK

HEIGHT: 5-10 • **WEIGHT:** 205 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Syracuse • **HOMETOWN:** Owings Mills, MD

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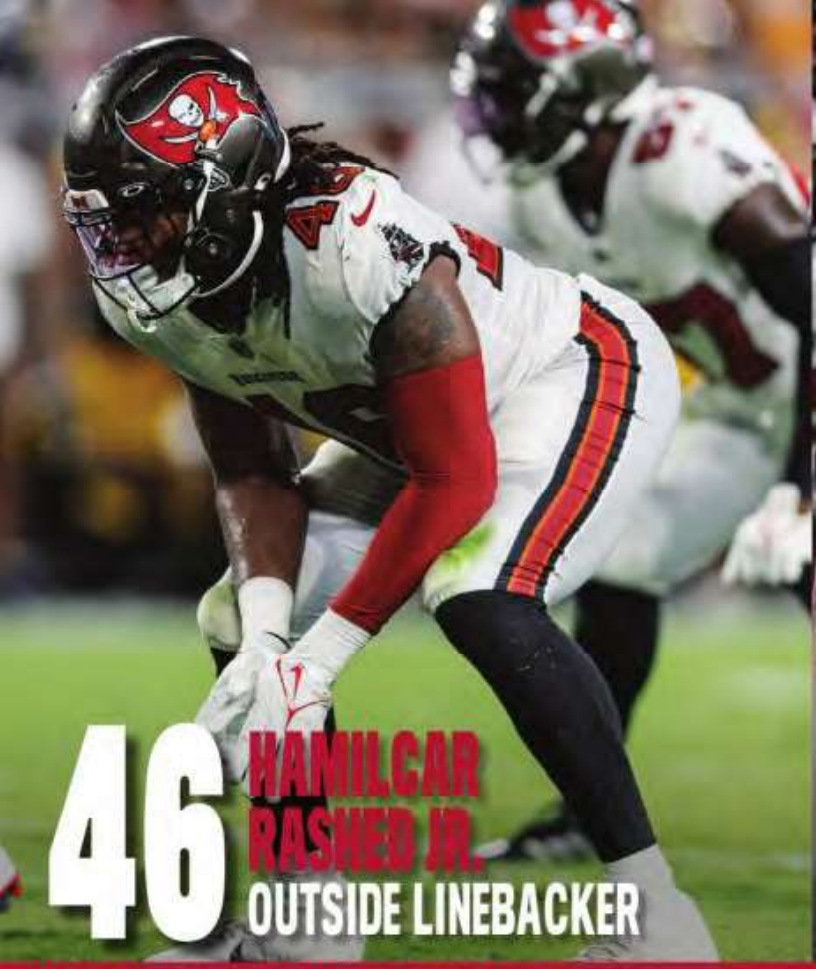
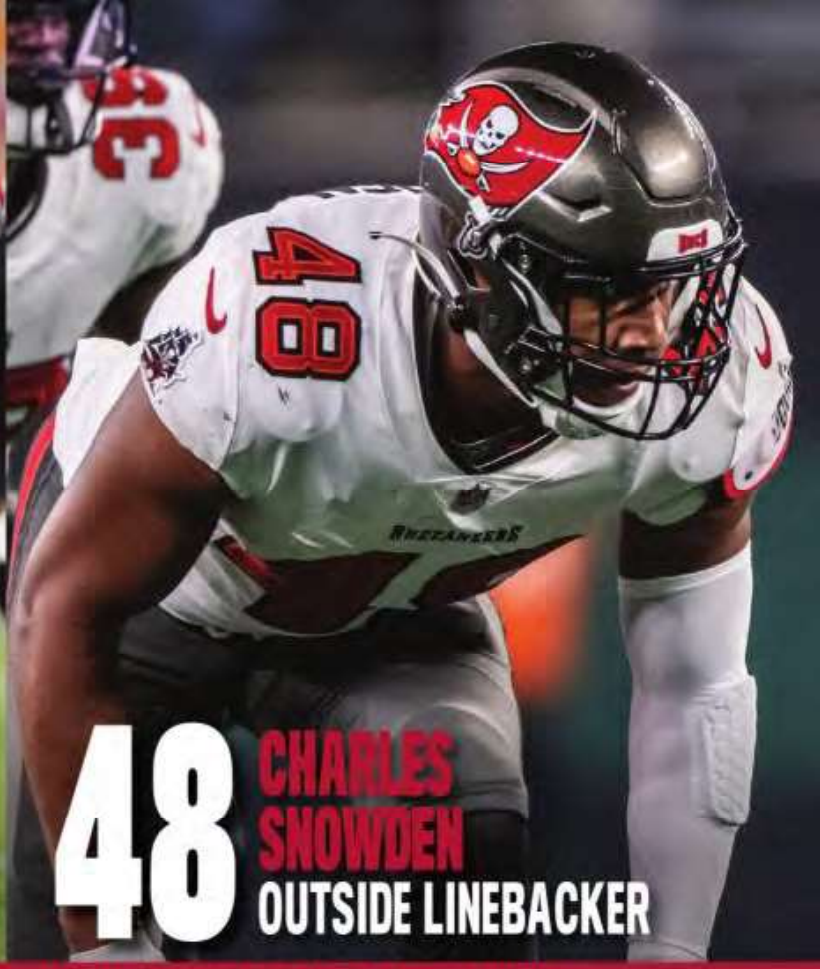


46 HAMILCAR RASHED JR.
OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 251 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: Oregon State • **HOHETOWN:** Phoenix, AZ

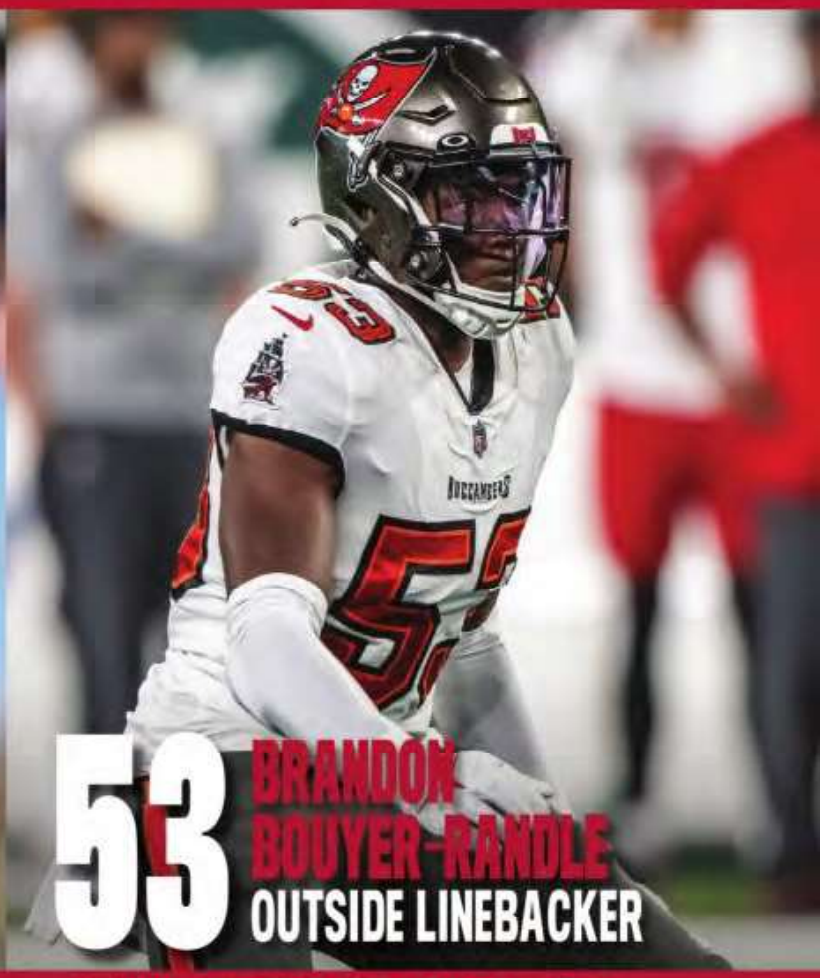


48 CHARLES SNOWDEN
OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-7 • **WEIGHT:** 245 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: Virgnia • **HOMETOWN:** Silver Spring, MD

51 J.J. RUSSELL
LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 225 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2
COLLEGE: Memphis • **HOMETOWN:** Grenada, MS



53 BRANDON BOUYER-RANDLE
OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 240 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Connecticut • **HOMETOWN:** Battle Creek, MI

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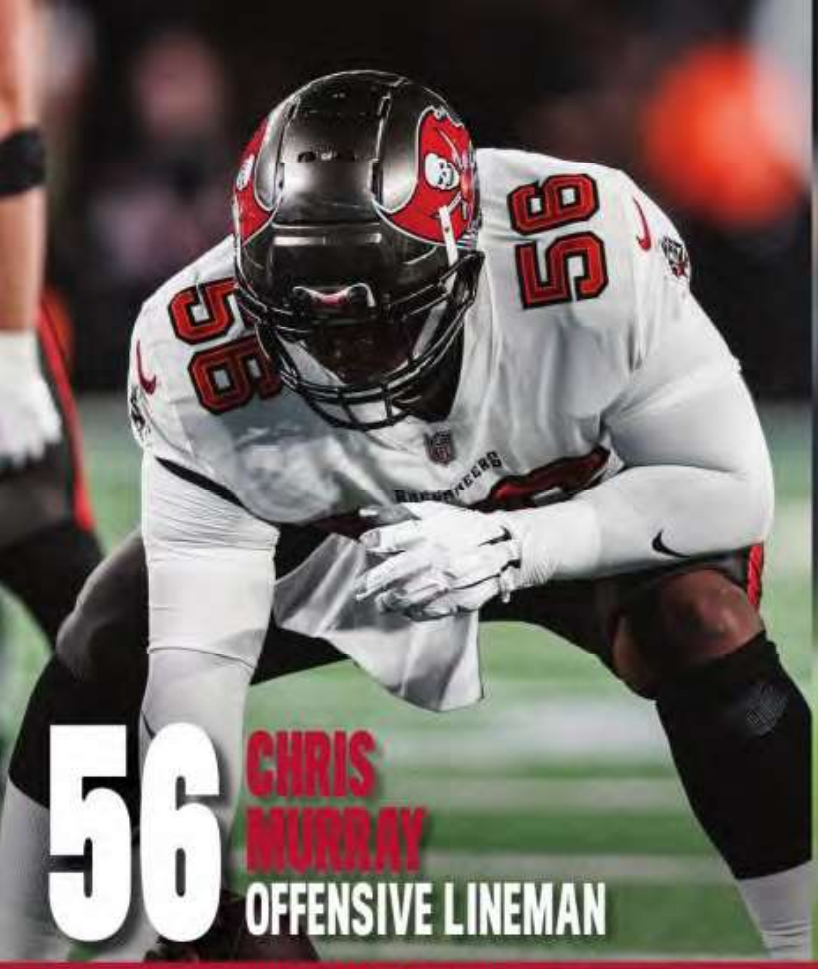
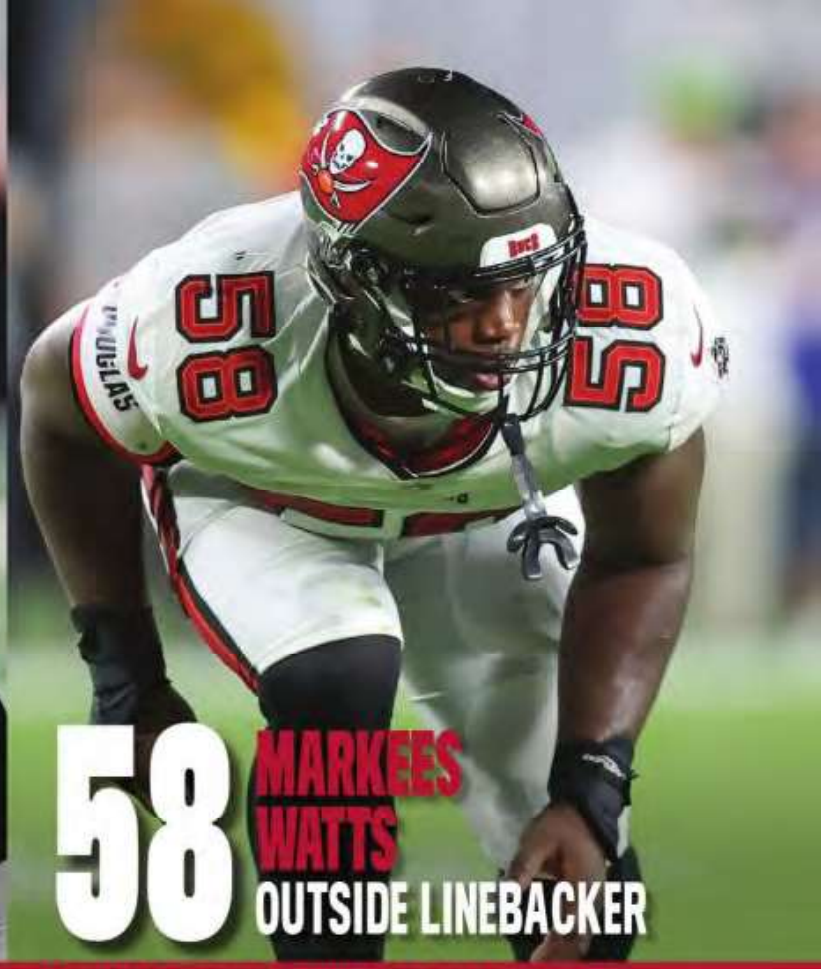


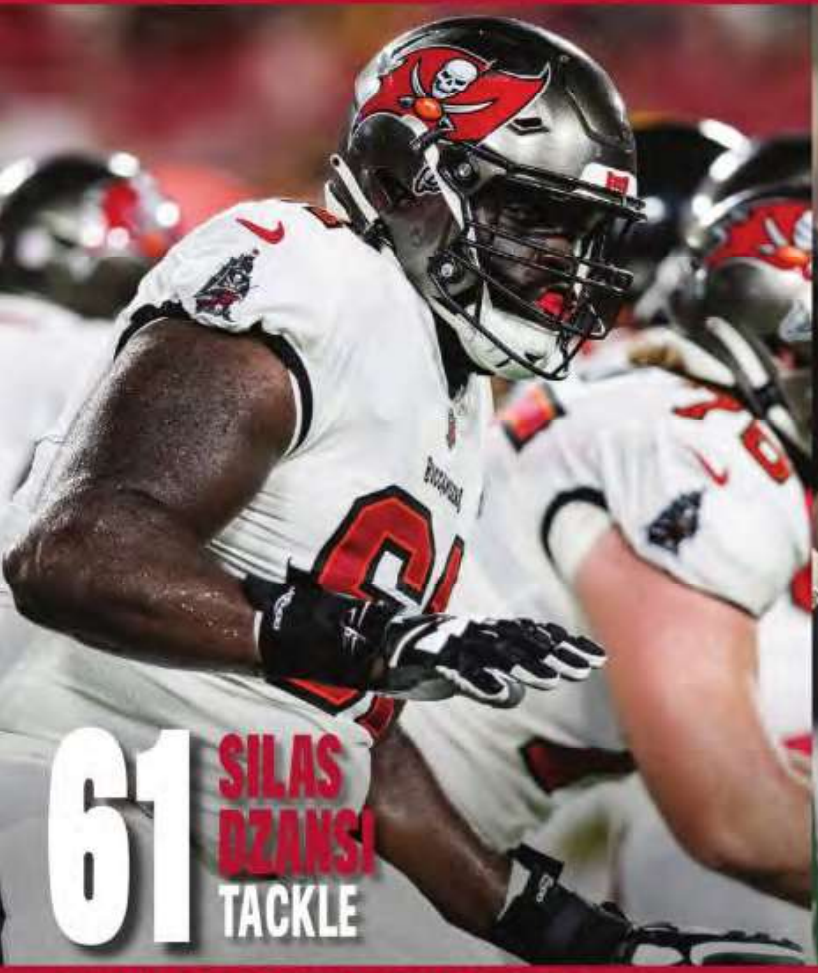
56 CHRIS MURRAY
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 308 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Oklahoma • **HOMETOWN:** Palmdale, CA



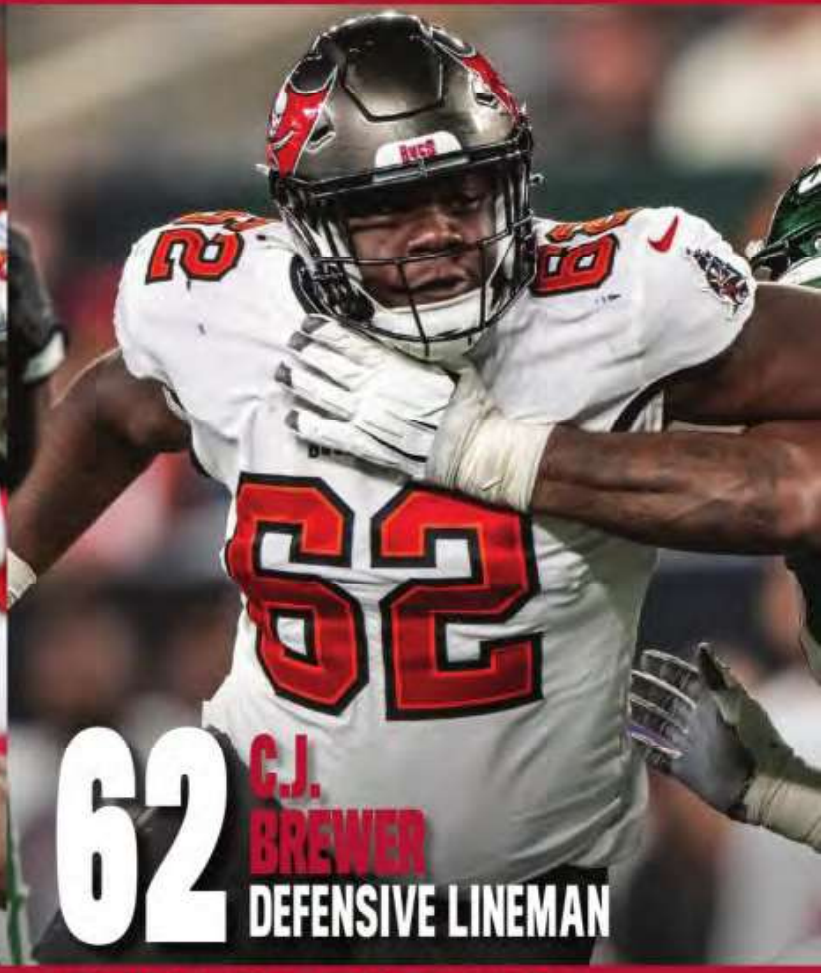
58 MARKEES WATTS
OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 240 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Charlotte • **HOMETOWN:** Lancaster, SC



61 SILAS DZANSI
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 335 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Virginia Tech • **HOMETOWN:** Woodbridge, VA



62 C.J. BREWER
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 290 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: Coastal Carolina • **HOMETOWN:** Bowdon, GA

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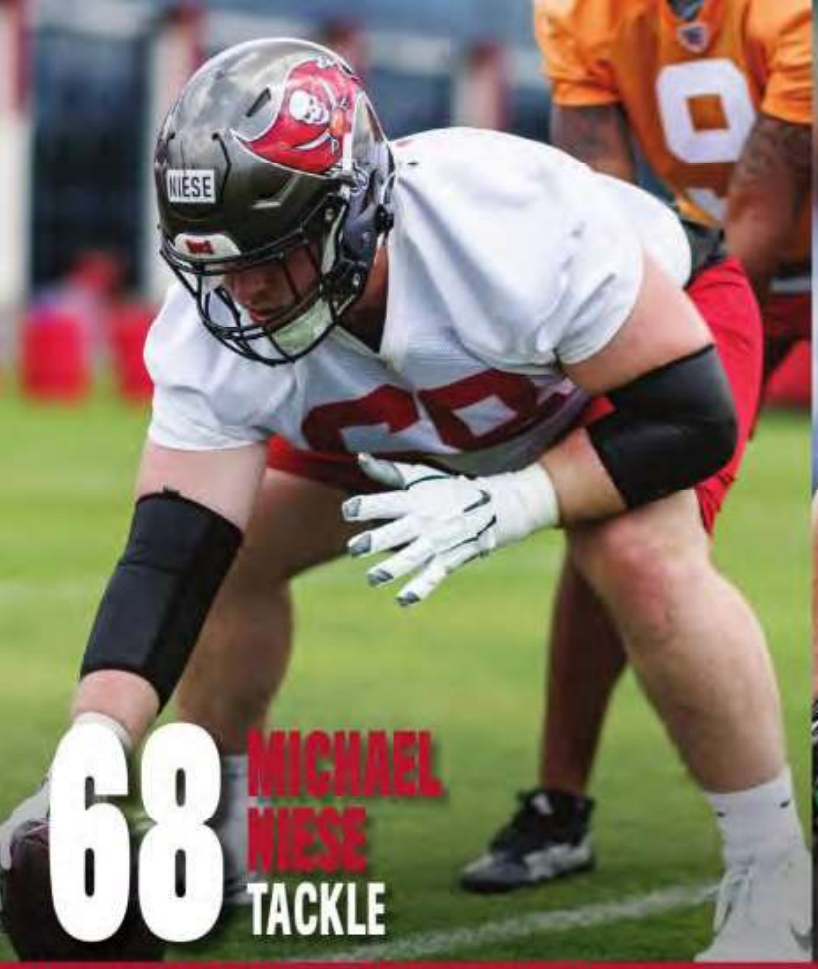
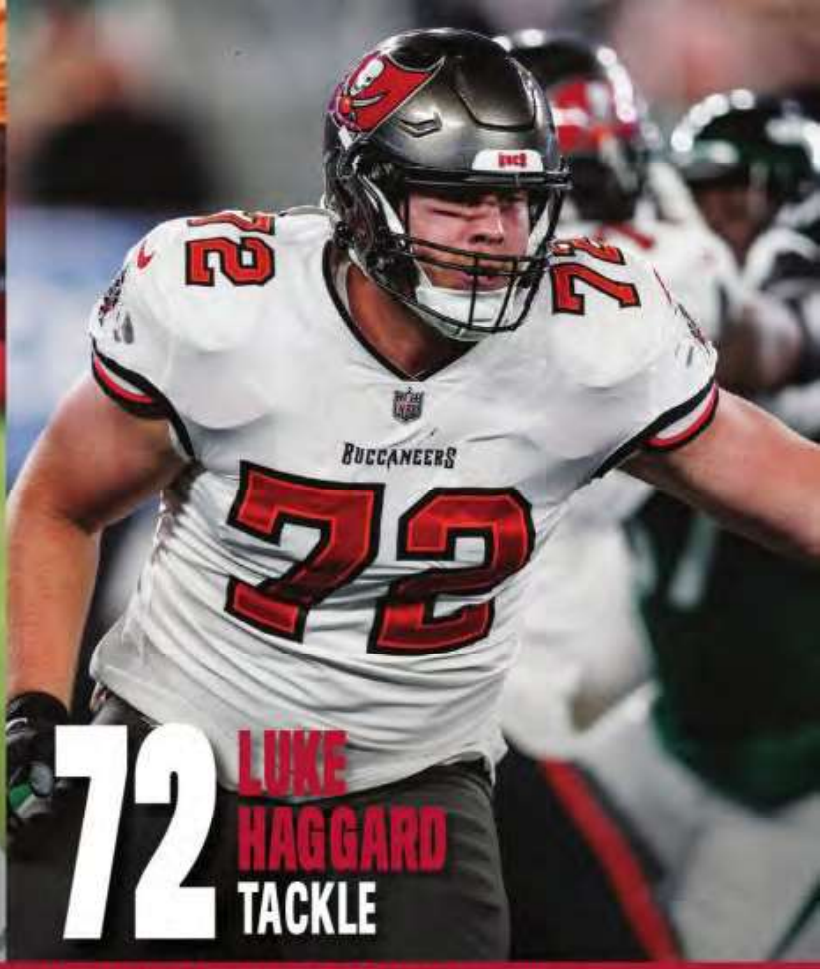


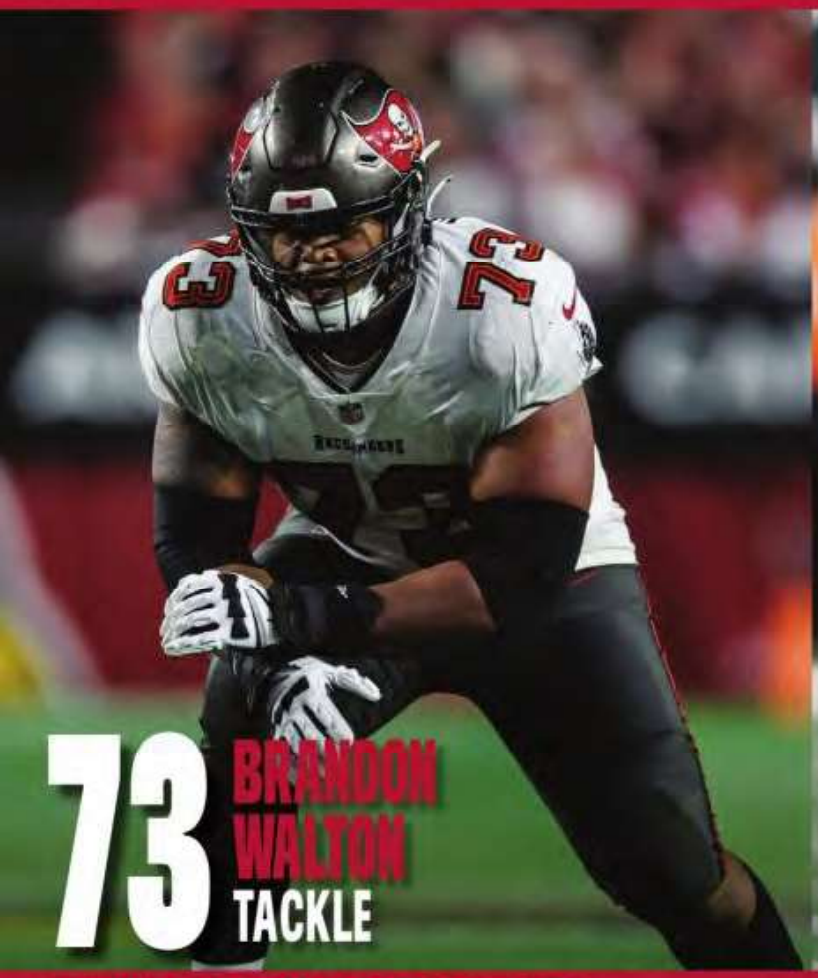
68 MICHAEL NIESE
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 295 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: Temple • **HOMETOWN:** Chesterfield, MO



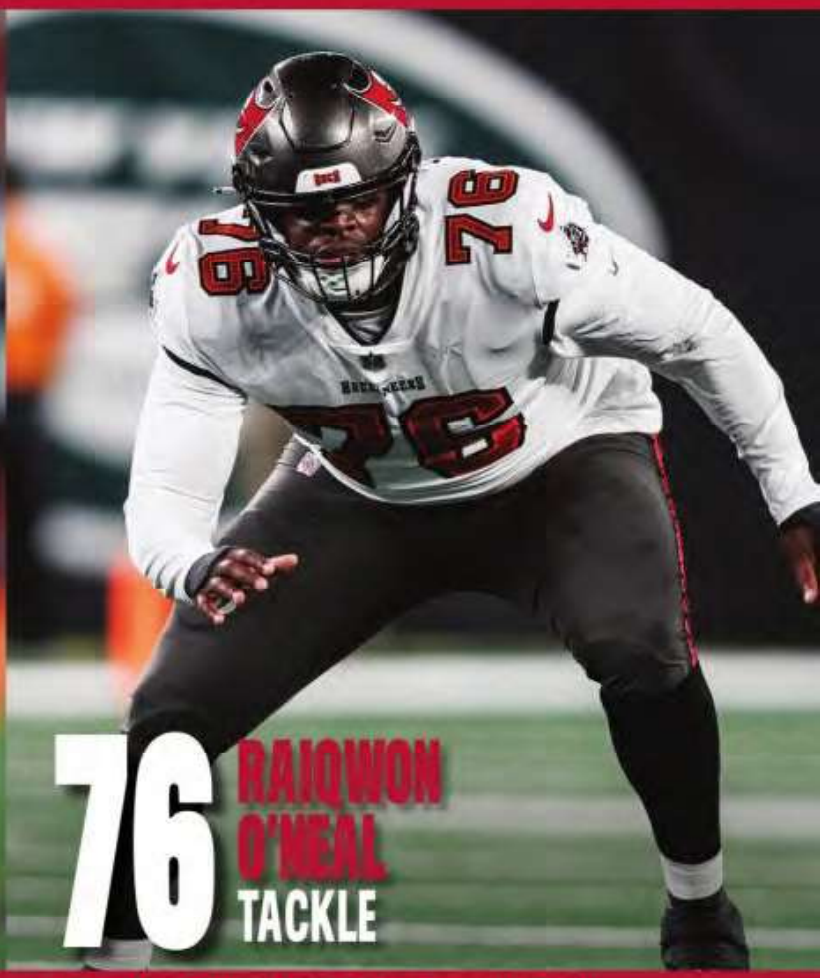
72 LUKE HAGGARD
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-7 • **WEIGHT:** 305 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Indiana • **HOMETOWN:** Petaluma, CA



73 BRANDON WALTON
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 300 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2
COLLEGE: Florida Atlantic • **HOMETOWN:** Largo, FL



76 RAIQWON O'NEAL
TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-4 • **WEIGHT:** 305 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: UCLA • **HOMETOWN:** Conway, SC

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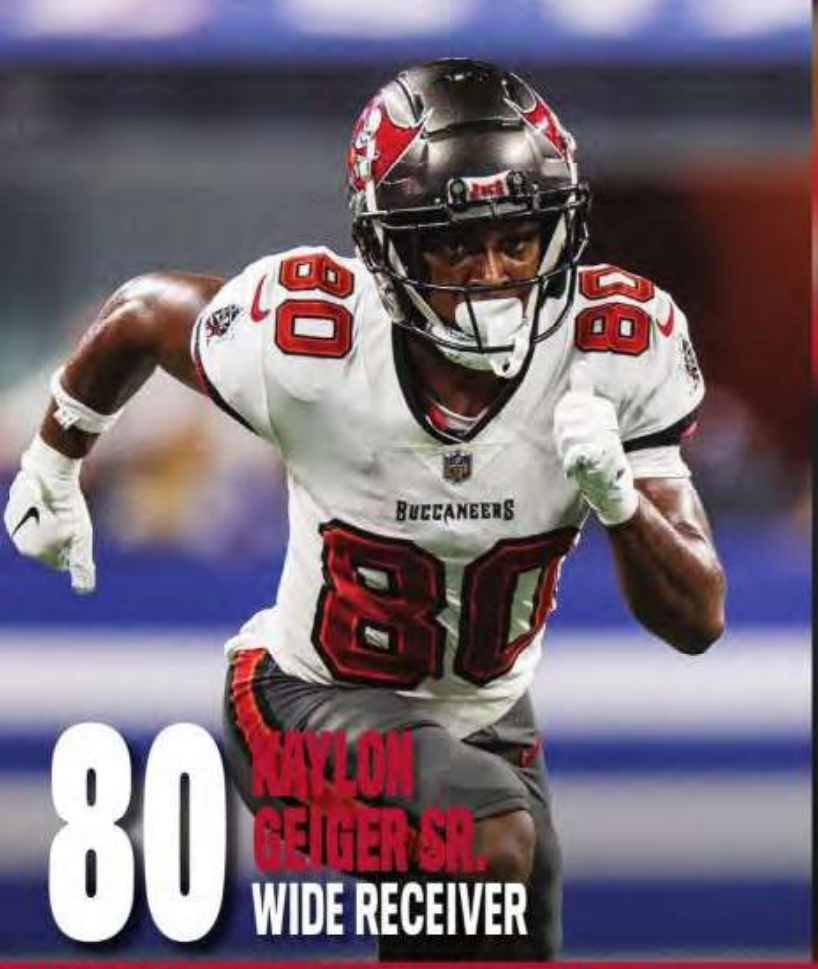


80 KAYLON GEIGER SR.
WIDE RECEIVER

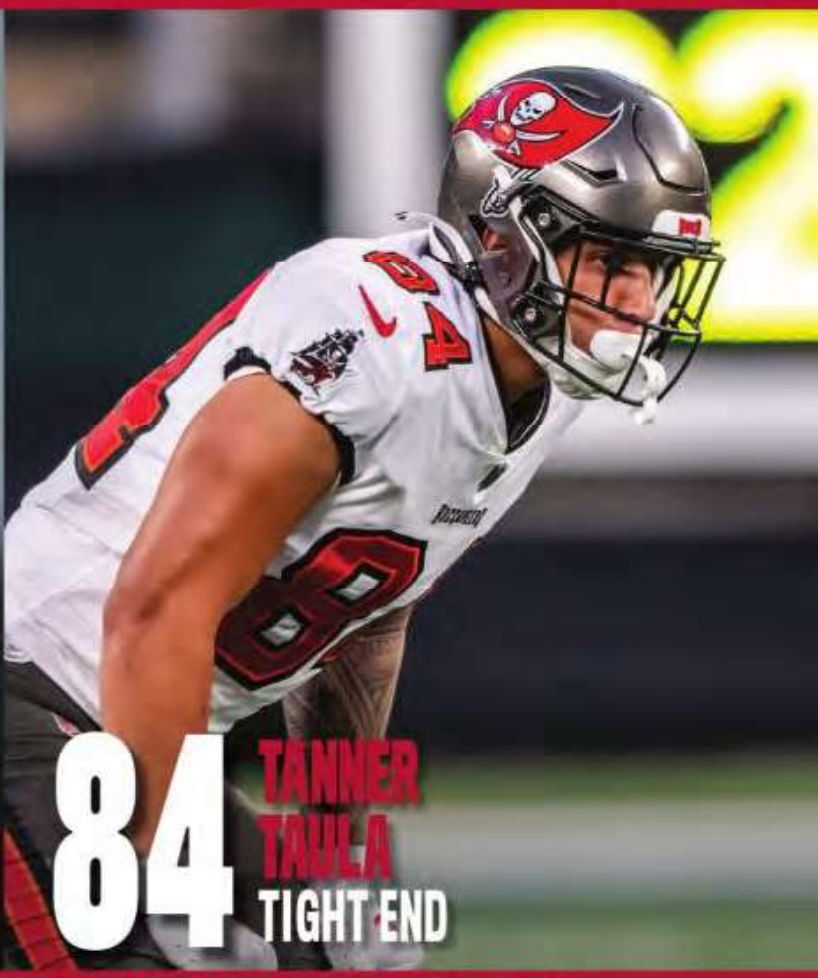
HEIGHT: 5-10 • **WEIGHT:** 180 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: Texas Tech • **HOMETOWN:** Fort Worth, TX

81 RYAN MILLER
WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-2 • **WEIGHT:** 221 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Furman • **HOMETOWN:** Jackson, TN

82 DOMINIQUE DAFNEY
TIGHT END

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 235 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 2
COLLEGE: Indiana State • **HOMETOWN:** West Des Moines, IA



84 TANNER TAULA
TIGHT END

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 255 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Illinois State • **HOMETOWN:** Blue Springs, MO

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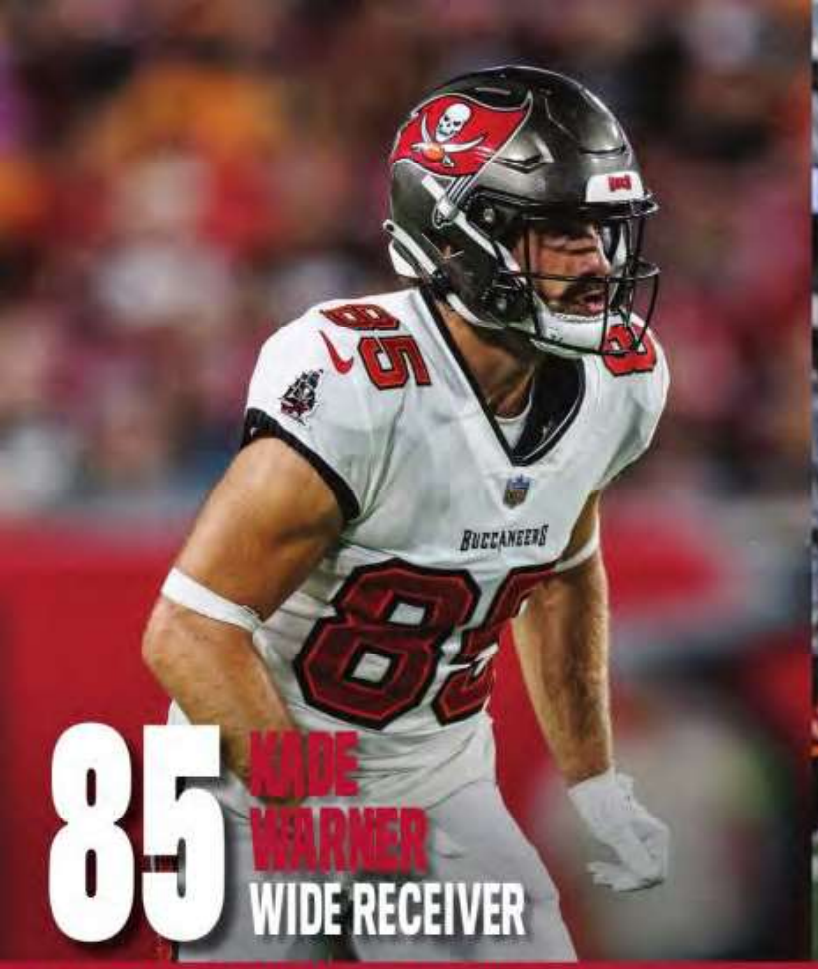
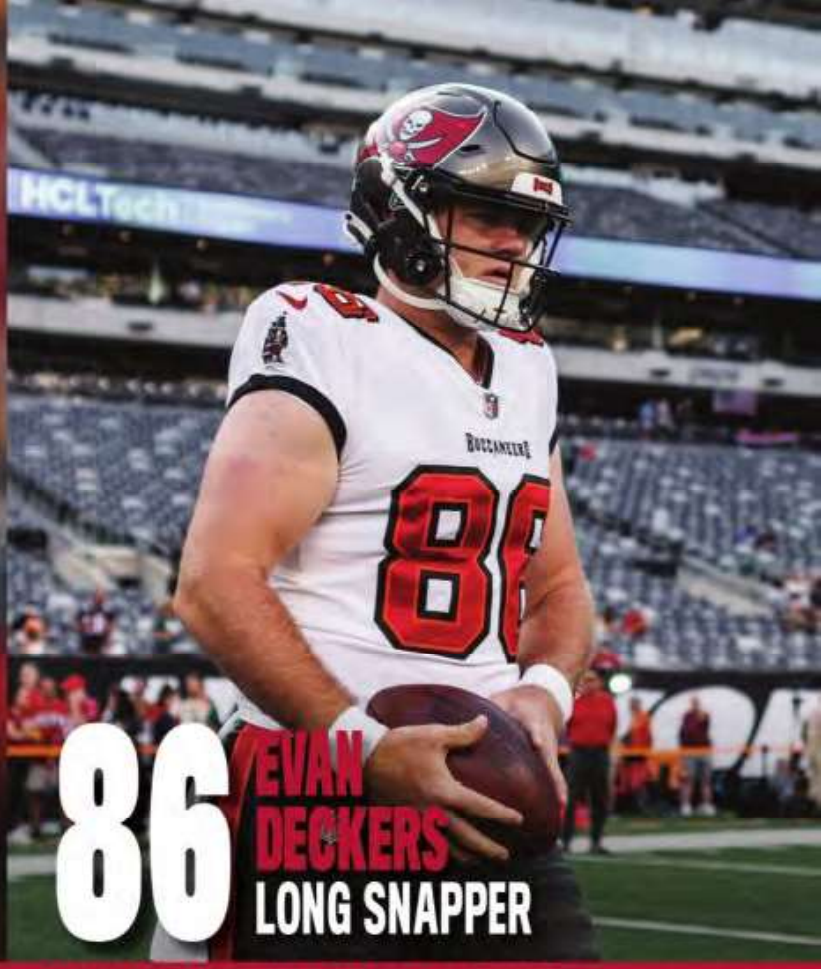


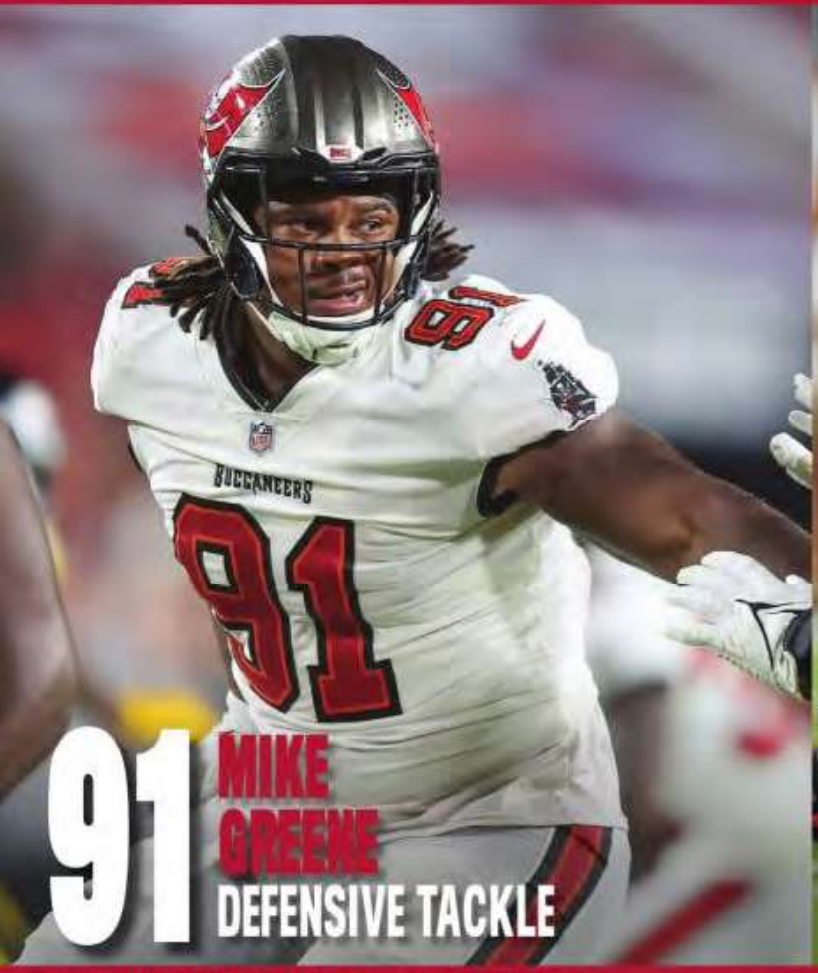
85 KADE WARNER
WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 204 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Kansas State • **HOMETOWN:** Scottsdale, AZ



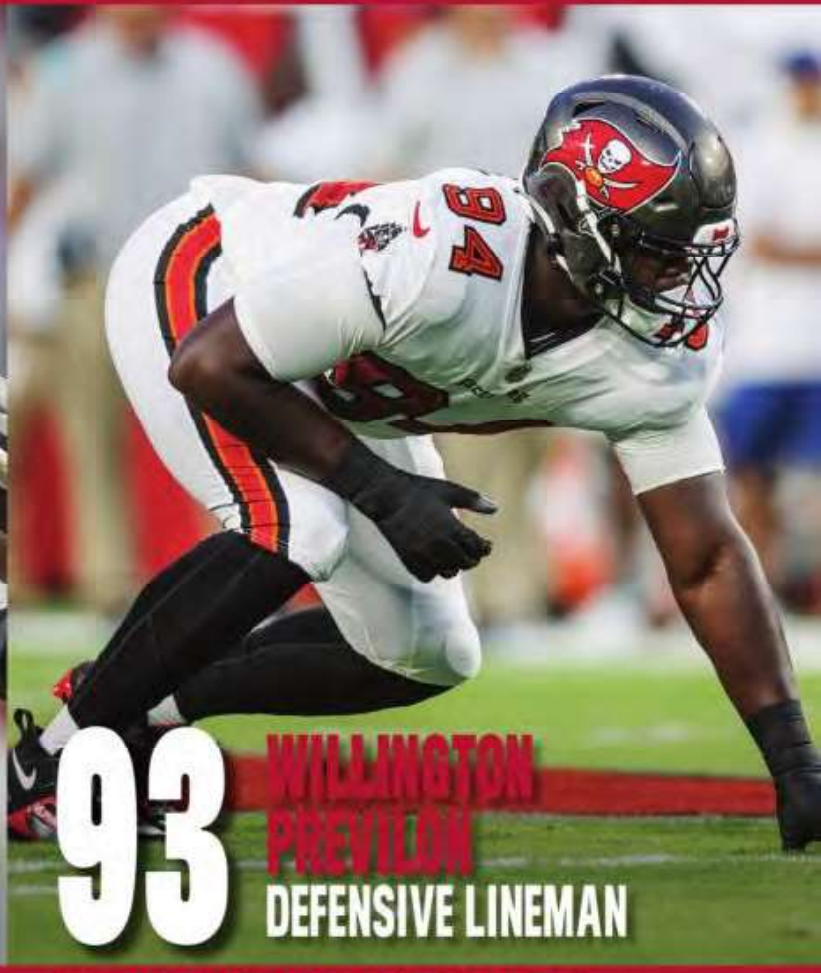
86 EVAN DECKERS
LONG SNAPPER

HEIGHT: 6-4 • **WEIGHT:** 244 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R
COLLEGE: Duke • **HOMETOWN:** Avon, CT



91 MIKE GREENE
DEFENSIVE TACKLE

HEIGHT: 6-3 • **WEIGHT:** 293 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: James Madison • **HOMETOWN:** Richmond, VA



93 WILLINGTON PREVILON
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

HEIGHT: 6-5 • **WEIGHT:** 285 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** 1
COLLEGE: Rutgers • **HOMETOWN:** Orange, NJ

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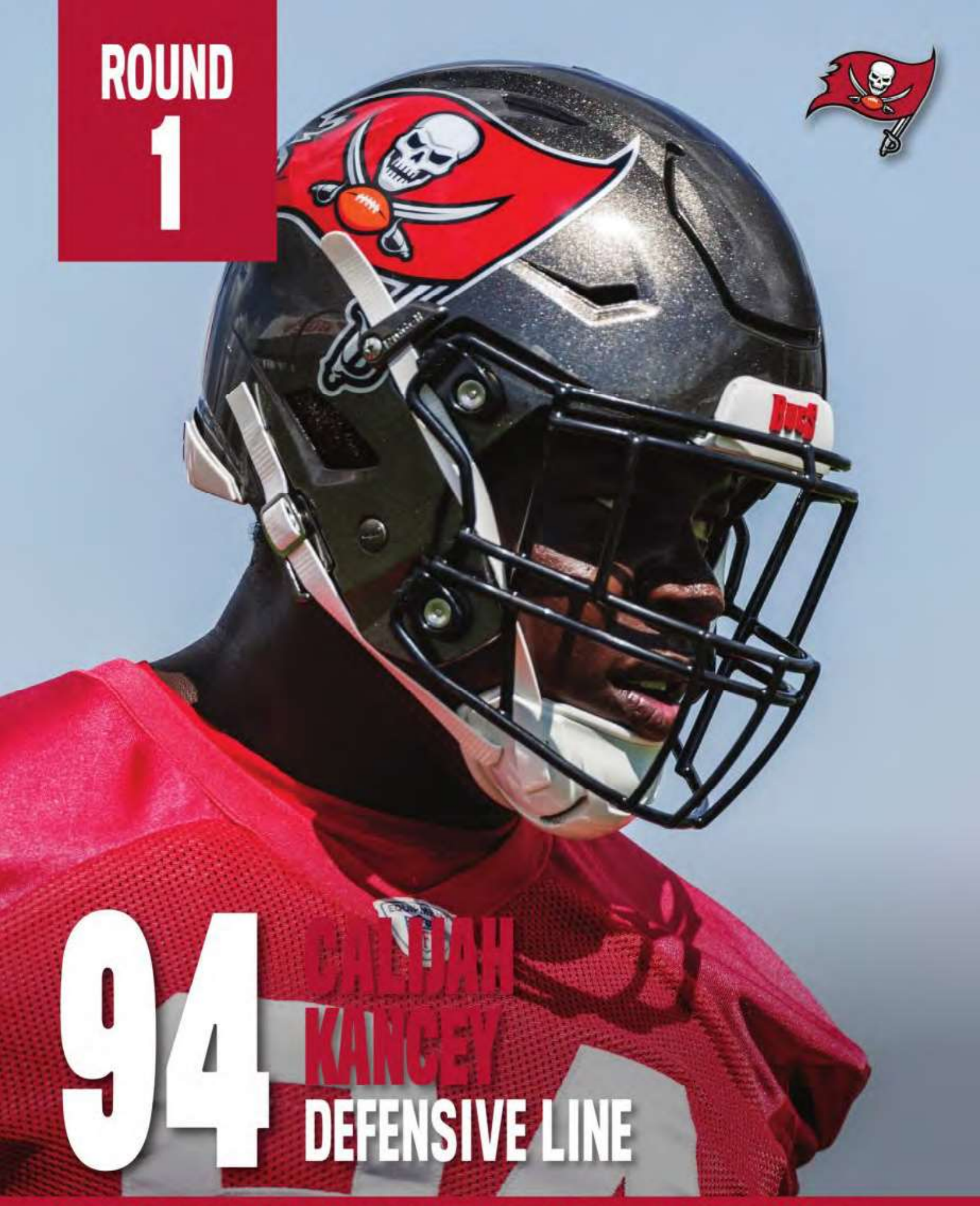

ROUND
1

94 CALIJAH KANCEY
DEFENSIVE LINE

HEIGHT: 6-0 • **WEIGHT:** 280 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R • **COLLEGE:** Pittsburgh • **HOMETOWN:** Miami, FL

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CALIJAH KANCEY'S TACTICAL APPROACH IN THE TRENCHES SPURS FIRST-ROUND SELECTION

By Brianna Dix

How Calijah Kancey, the 19th overall selection in the 2023 NFL Draft, turned an undersized knock into a strength, perfecting his technique and pass rush repertoire at the line of scrimmage. A glimpse into his cerebral approach on the gridiron.

There is a brief moment of stillness before the snap of the ball. Players stoically get into their stance at the line of scrimmage. Linemen are frozen and endless possibilities await. Then, an unpredictable and tactical game of chess ensues between the white lines as bodies collide. For Buccaneers' first-round pick Calijah Kancey, that split second is utter bliss.

Kancey beams with excitement as he strolls down a hallway in the AdventHealth Training Center. It is May and he is at a pivot point – removed from the accolades achieved at Pittsburgh and furiously working towards dominion at the NFL level. Rookie minicamp is in the rearview and training camp looms. Emotions from draft night are a distant memory and the next chapter has not been written. Anticipation builds for the future and as Kancey reclines in a small red chair, he peers into the past. In reminiscence on career-defining milestones, Kancey grins at the flashbacks.

It was third-and-nine. Pittsburgh commanded a 31-14 advantage over Rhode Island. Kancey lined up on the outside shoulder of the guard, itching with anticipation. The center snapped the ball; Kancey utilized a lethal cross-chop maneuver and flew by the guard untouched through the B-gap. The running back stepped up, and Kancey blasted him into the quarterback for a sack.

"I knew that was a quick-set type of guard and he favored shooting with his outside hand," Kancey said. "So, for me, my goal was to align loose, and I wanted to take one big, hard step into him and split his [mid-section] to make him think that I was going power. He was a guy that as soon as you engaged him, he lowered his head and would shoot his outside arm. I aligned loose and baited him like I was going power, he shot his outside arm and that was everything that I needed. I worked the move and then he was just stuck at the line."

For Kancey, his unadulterated love of his chosen sport began at the age of four, when he stepped on a football field for the first time. From that point on, the space between the hashes became his sanctuary. As reps increased over the years and football practice became a staple in his itinerary, the fetish, as he calls it, grew. Kancey daydreamed of football with every breath, envisioning one day playing under the prime-time lights. Football was more than an impassioned hobby to him, it was poetry in motion.

A Miami native, Kancey enrolled at inner-city powerhouse Miami Northwestern High School and started on varsity as a junior defensive lineman. That year, he posted 98 tackles, guiding the team to a 14-win season and the 2017 6A state championship. During his senior campaign, Kancey led Northwestern to a 10-5 record and a second-consecutive state title. He concluded his senior season with 110 tackles, garnering all-county and all-conference honors in 2018. Kancey became the No. 63 defensive tackle in the 2019 recruiting class and the No. 113 recruit in the state of Florida. He received several offers from Power 5 programs but developed a unique bond with Pittsburgh's defensive line coach and area recruiter, Charlie Partridge, and committed to play for Head Coach Pat Narduzzi and the gritty Panthers.

"He never said this directly to me until it came out publicly, but part of the bond we developed was that I told him right out of the gate that I had no doubts," Partridge recalled. "There were a lot of schools that were making a big deal about his size, but I did not have any reservations. When I saw him on film, I knew he was a smaller guy, but I thought, 'Man is he dynamic.' When we got him in person and I saw all of the different things that we look at – shoulders, wrist, body frame, etc. – I knew he could be in the 280s and that was a fit for our system. I told him, 'There is no hesitation with me.' I did have the advantage of being the area recruiter and the position coach. So, I was born and raised in South Florida, and I coached his position. So thankfully for me, that stood out. I was not an area coach trying to sell him to the position coach. I came in and I knew, so I told him, 'I don't like your film. I love your film.' I think that carried some weight with him."

Kancey redshirted his first year at Pitt, as he underwent a body transformation. He arrived at 250 pounds and morphed into a 280-pound menace, building strength. During that developmental process of waiting, Kancey emphasized what he could control - mental fortitude. The cerebral approach Kancey had behind closed doors during that year cultivated growth and catapulted him forward. The coaching staff quickly realized that Kancey was an anomaly and made him the focal point of pressure packages in Pitt's defense. Kancey was thrust into a variety of different roles in Narduzzi's 4-3 base scheme to maximize his ability to wreak havoc, lining up everywhere from nose tackle to the five-technique. He set the tone with a relentless motor and first-step quickness off the snap, terrorizing the pocket.

"You knew his time was coming the year he redshirted because he managed it so well even though he was frustrated like every kid in that situation," Partridge commented. "It wasn't long after he walked in the door, and I was hearing stories of how he was nearly unblockable by the scout team. You knew that he was going to be 'that guy' because of his gifts and work ethic to learn packages, that he would be a guy we featured. It was within a year of him being on campus that we knew he was going to be different from the majority.

"He was so twitchy and so quick. Calijah has the best quickness, get off, and power from that quickness and speed that I have coached. Take that for what it is worth. J.J. [Watt] is a great player and I have been fortunate to coach many great players including Trey Flowers, Trey Hendrickson, and the ability to be around those caliber players. This guy has the best pure interior quickness that I have ever coached. He is different and he has handled it all so well, too. He has never been on a list and has never created a distraction where I had to worry about anything off-the-field with him. We just developed."

A three-year starter at Pittsburgh, Kancey made his mark in 2021, accumulating 13.0 tackles for loss, 7.0 sacks, one forced fumble and a pass defensed. He continued to emerge in 2022, solidifying his first-round draft status. Kancey led all FBS defensive tackles in tackles for loss (14.5), with 46.8 percent of his tackles coming in enemy territory, and became the program's first unanimous All-American since Aaron Donald. He also received ACC Defensive Player of the Year honors for his contributions in the trenches. Kancey had the most pressures for an interior defensive lineman, with 13 more than second place out of Power 5 schools. He continuously found angles to exploit in a forward-charging assault. With elite explosiveness off the snap, short-area quickness, exceptional awareness, and violent hands, Kancey carved out his niche as a well-rounded athlete, dominating as both a pass rusher and as a run defender. Perhaps the most alluring trait of them all – urgency. Kancey has the rare discernment in-game to not only attack but react amidst the chaos to counters and alignments.

"Going into Monday, around 10 a.m. I would watch film on the upcoming team that we were playing," Kancey described. "I wanted to watch both guards and the center and then I wanted to watch first and second string because someone could get hurt. Those were the guys that I would be going against 80 percent, 90 percent of the game. I wanted to get a feel for the guys and to see if they had any tendencies. I would see if the opponent was a low-hand puncher or a high-handed puncher. 'Does he finish blocks? Does he like to lean when it is about to be a run? Does he sit back on his heels when it is about to be a pass?' I just tried to pick up those things and then I would look at what he would get beat with, what he would not let guys beat him with and I just broke it down. Then, I would write it down. On Tuesday, I would let the scout team know, 'Ok, this guy does this, and we need to see this in practice.' So, the whole week I was going through what the guys do in a game, but I was also getting the reps in practice. So, that by the time the game arrived, I was ready to react and go make a play."

Some players fire off the ball aimlessly with a sack tally in mind, but Kancey rushes with purpose. He has calculated a specified and elaborate plan to beat the person staring at him across the line of scrimmage. Kancey has an insatiable hunger for quarterbacks and that mindset has fostered stellar production. He has a cultivated feel for when to use certain moves and how to bait guards by using previous moves to his advantage on the next. Kancey's move-to-move transitions are timely and destructive. Extensive film study and dexterity sparked his ascension, allowing him to play fast. With a refined pass rush arsenal, he became an imposing force. Week-to-week, he created an unrivaled toolset of moves and was ready to unleash it at any given second. Kancey never attacks in the same way, keeping the opposition guessing.

"He can alternate from a speed move - which he has various ones - to a power move, to a designed or a check-two gain, and he can use those to complement the other," Partridge assessed. "For example, the cross-chop has become very in vogue, and he is very good at it, but he is not going to cross-chop 75 times a game. He may beat you with a cross-chop, but he is going to use that to set up a fake-cross chop to power, to where he is going to use that three plays down the road to set up the guy coming in next to him and he will wrap around. That is hard to get kids to really understand and to even track within a game, 'Ok, what did I do the last time I pass rushed this guy?' He got more than proficient in that."

Preparation breeds success and Kancey is the personification of that sentiment. On Saturdays, centers could hardly get their head up after the snap before Kancey was there disrupting. He was a bull in a China shop. For every successful rep, an endless amount of work led to that climactic event, whether it was a check Kancey made or a protection he anticipated

> **"HE IS JUST A PLAYMAKER. HE IS TOUGH, HE IS COMPETITIVE AND EVERYTHING WE ARE TRYING TO BUILD AROUND."**

coming. The self-motivated phenom initiated one-on-one meetings on Wednesday evenings with Coach Partridge for an instructional and detailed overview of each week's rush plan. The result paid dividends on the gridiron and emboldened him.

"Tuesday nights, as a staff we gameplan for third downs," Partridge explained. "We presented it to the kids on Wednesday morning, installed it and would practice it. Then, Calijah would come back in, and it became a regular meeting with me one-on-one on Wednesday nights to put together his gameplan within the gameplan. 'Coach, why did you guys select this, this and this? What protections are we expecting? OK, so if I see this or that then I can expect this or that.' I got a lot of joy during the process leading up to the draft and they would show some highlights, and, in my head, I was thinking, 'There is more to that play than just the highlight that the fan is seeing.' In those Wednesday night one-on-one meetings that he wanted to have to make sure he put his gameplan together, he learned how to prepare like a pro. It is in those moments to me that define what he has become."

Due to his small frame by NFL defensive linemen standards (6-foot-1, 281 pounds), Kancey has had to work twice as hard on technique at the point of attack in preparing for double teams. Because of Kancey's consistent penetration against single blocks, it was a matter of when not if he would draw attention on traps and combo blocks. Other interior defensive linemen who are larger in stature can still survive on plays without proper fundamentals. For Kancey, he must utilize flawless technique in order to achieve the proper leverage or he will be moved off his spot. Pad level is vital and Kancey has shifted what others perceive as a flaw into a strength. Rather than balloon up to fit the coveted "norm," Kancey spent countless hours honing in on perfecting his stance at the point to mitigate a surmised weakness.

"It was all about working on the stance," Kancey elaborated. "If you are leaning too hard in your stance, you will have a bad step. A lot of guys put their off hand and rest it on their knee, that makes your body tilt and could cause a bad step. Then also, just knowing what is coming your way. If you have the running back on the same side as you, you should be expecting a power double or a slip combo and if the running back is opposite of you, then you should be expecting an inside zone your way or something like that. So, if you dip back and he is away from you, then you should be expecting a trap. It is all a plus and a minus. Your stance definitely reflects on what demeanor you are getting from the offense. If it is a third down and you know that it is a pass, you don't want to hide your feet. Your feet should be equal in a wide base. You want to get staggered and get in a loose stance so there is a lot that plays into it."

Despite the exorbitant number of hours and effort put in, the question marks persisted during the pre-draft process. When Kancey skipped his senior season to enter the 2023 NFL Draft, he immediately became one of the most polarizing players in the class. As NFL mock drafts monopolized headlines and pundits began the annual evaluation chatter, the "undersized" narrative became synonymously linked to Kancey.

Too small.

Cannot hold up at the point.

His arms are too short (sub 74-inch wingspan).

Will get bullied off his rush path.

Faulty anchor.

Those are the same weaknesses used to describe future first-ballot Hall of Famer and transcendent defender Aaron Donald in 2014. Donald has cemented his legacy as one of the most impactful players in the history of the game. Although it is unfair to compare Kancey, who has never played a down of football as a pro, to one of the all-time greats, the parallels are encouraging. Kancey was built in the same blue-collar mold at Pittsburgh. For the Buccaneers, the intangibles and tantalizing athletic traits outweighed the undersized knock.

"Right out of the gate, his get off, and the level of toughness and competitiveness - all of the things for me in my evaluation of Calijah were at a very high level," said Cesar Rivera, the Bucs' northeast region college scout. "A lot of times you get players who have one, maybe two or three of those but to get like four or five of them at a high level, he jumped off the tape. I remember being there in the summer, probably the second week of August last year, and watching him in practice doing one-on-one pass rush drills and he was unblockable. He was on a totally different level than everyone else. It was almost like before the play started, everybody knew what was going to happen and they still could not stop him. He is just so savvy with his rush moves. I remember sitting there right, and each one of those periods (10, 15) goes by. He was up next to go again, and the whistle blew for the end of the period, and I remember being disappointed that I didn't get to see him do another rep. He was just so entertaining."

The year-long scouting process leading into draft night is strenuous. It is often a thankless job but one that vastly affects the future of every NFL franchise. For the Buccaneers, the staff meets annually three times: in December, February and again in April. The December week-long deliberation is strictly on character. The staff and front office sit, go over the board and discuss a variety of topics including what drives the player, how he has responded to adversity, and does he love football? In February, after more exposure on prospects occur, the skill discussions commence. The group outlines strengths, weaknesses and pinpoints where on the board each player should fall. Lastly in April, the final meeting takes place after the Combine, Pro Days and 30 visits have concluded. A firm understanding is grasped of each prospect and conclusive thoughts are vocalized. In the case of Calijah Kancey, he checked the necessary boxes and then some. He ran a 4.67 40-yard dash, the fastest by a defensive tackle since 2003, which left onlookers salivating and affirmed what Tampa Bay already knew to be true.

"It is always great to see something on tape and then they go test at the Combine and it supports it," Rivera stated. "He is just so fast and so tough to block. Visually, I can see it now, it's third-and-one, we need to make a stop and they are going to try and run the ball off tackle. He is going to be so quick off the ball that they are not going to even be able to land a hand on him and he is going to make a tackle for loss. I already see that with this kid. He is just a playmaker. He is tough, he is competitive and everything we are trying to build around. That was the thing when I had to present who this kid is - my take and my reason for why this kid should be a Buccaneer - it was, 'This kid exemplifies everything that we talk about that we want in a player on and off the field.'

"During the process, I talked to a lot of Pitt defensive players, and I would always ask them about Calijah, and I would say, 'Tell me about your teammate Calijah.' That is when you get a really good understanding of what these guys mean to their team. It was always glowing reviews. It was, 'He is the toughest.' It was always, 'He is one of the hardest working.' One of the things I got from one of the coaches was, 'As good of a player he is, he is a better worker. As good of a worker he is, he is an even better person.' So, when you hear things like that, it is what you want. But when you talk to more people and they confirm it over and over and over again and then you get to talk to him and you see it too, it is reassuring and makes you feel confident going into those meetings to say, 'Hey Jason Licht' or 'Hey John Spytek, this is what this kid is about, and this is who he is.' To me, it all goes back to pride. He is a prideful kid, and he is passionate. I am a firm believer that in the way that you do one thing, is the way that you do everything. I think Calijah exemplifies that: prideful, hardworking, good-natured and a good teammate. He is exemplary in a lot of areas."

On April 27, the Buccaneers landed their wish-list prospect with the 19th overall pick, sending Kancey to Tampa Bay. In Todd Bowles' attack-styled system, Kancey will bring another dimension with his quickness. He is adept at driving blockers back with proper leverage and contact balance. Kancey has a limitless ceiling, dictating rushes with explosion. As he acclimates to the NFL, Kancey will fine-tune his craft. He has the potential to become a franchise cornerstone that offensive coordinators are forced to create blocking schemes around.

Towering over his small red chair, Kancey shuffles in his seat. He is anchored by the work it took to reach the NFL's doorstep. Rather than basking in the destination he conjured up in his mind numerous times, he is enraptured by the mental chess match in the trenches. As he chronicles his evaluation process pre-snap at the line of scrimmage, Kancey lights up, personifying the awestruck wonder of that four-year-old little boy.

"Now that I have the call and I know the down-and-distance and the formation, I am keying my guy on near-knee, near-shoulder," he said. "I am processing, 'Ok, if he gives me this, if he gives me a low hand and it is third-and-eight, I am going to go do this. Or, if it is second-and-three, or if it is first-and-ten, I am going to react this way. Or, if it is third-and-ten, then I am going to align loose. If he is light on his stance, then it is pass.' I break it down and I find what I want to attack so if he is a two-step kick, outside hand-puncher, then I will align loose and make him kick to me. Then once he gets that outside hand, I am going to react. If he is a guy that likes to be head over heels and launch, then I am definitely going to go inside or give him a shake-power move.

"That's the best part, just going against a guy that is twice your size and dominating him. It is almost like winning a scratch-off or hitting the lottery. I have never won the lottery, but I know that feeling when I beat the person across from me. For me to go and watch film and break down the tape of someone, then to get into the game and actually see what I prepared for happen, it is very exciting. I love that feeling."

Come fall, when football takes center stage, Kancey will step onto the field donning No. 94 for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. As he places his hand in the dirt and skillfully assesses his opponent as time stands still, a new era will dawn.

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ROUND
2

69

CODY MAUCH

GUARD

HEIGHT: 6-6 • **WEIGHT:** 303 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R • **COLLEGE:** North Dakota State • **HOMETOWN:** Hankinson, ND

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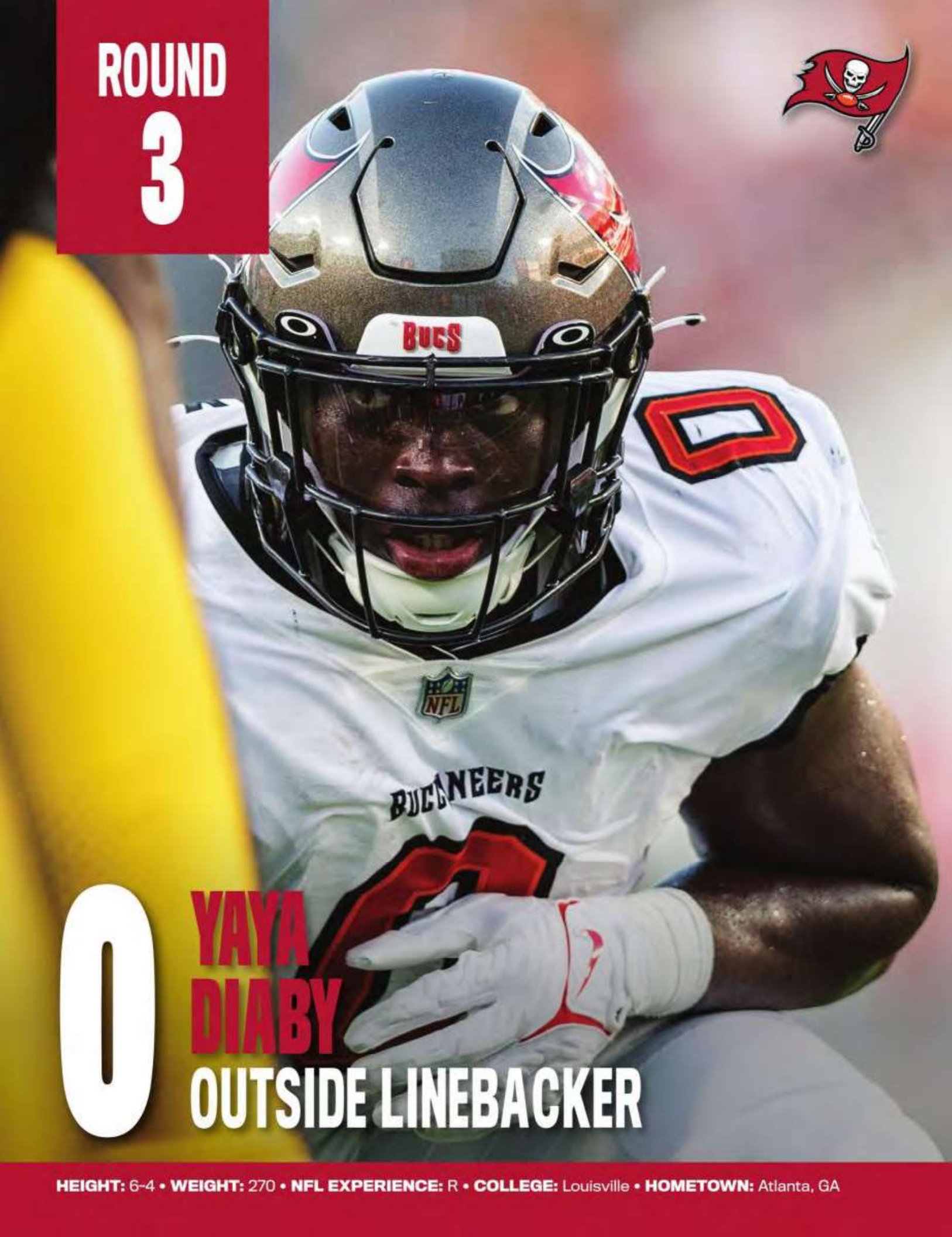

0 YAYA DIABY

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

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ROUND
5

8

SIRVOCEA DENNIS

LINEBACKER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 230 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R • **COLLEGE:** Pittsburgh • **HOMETOWN:** Syracuse, NY

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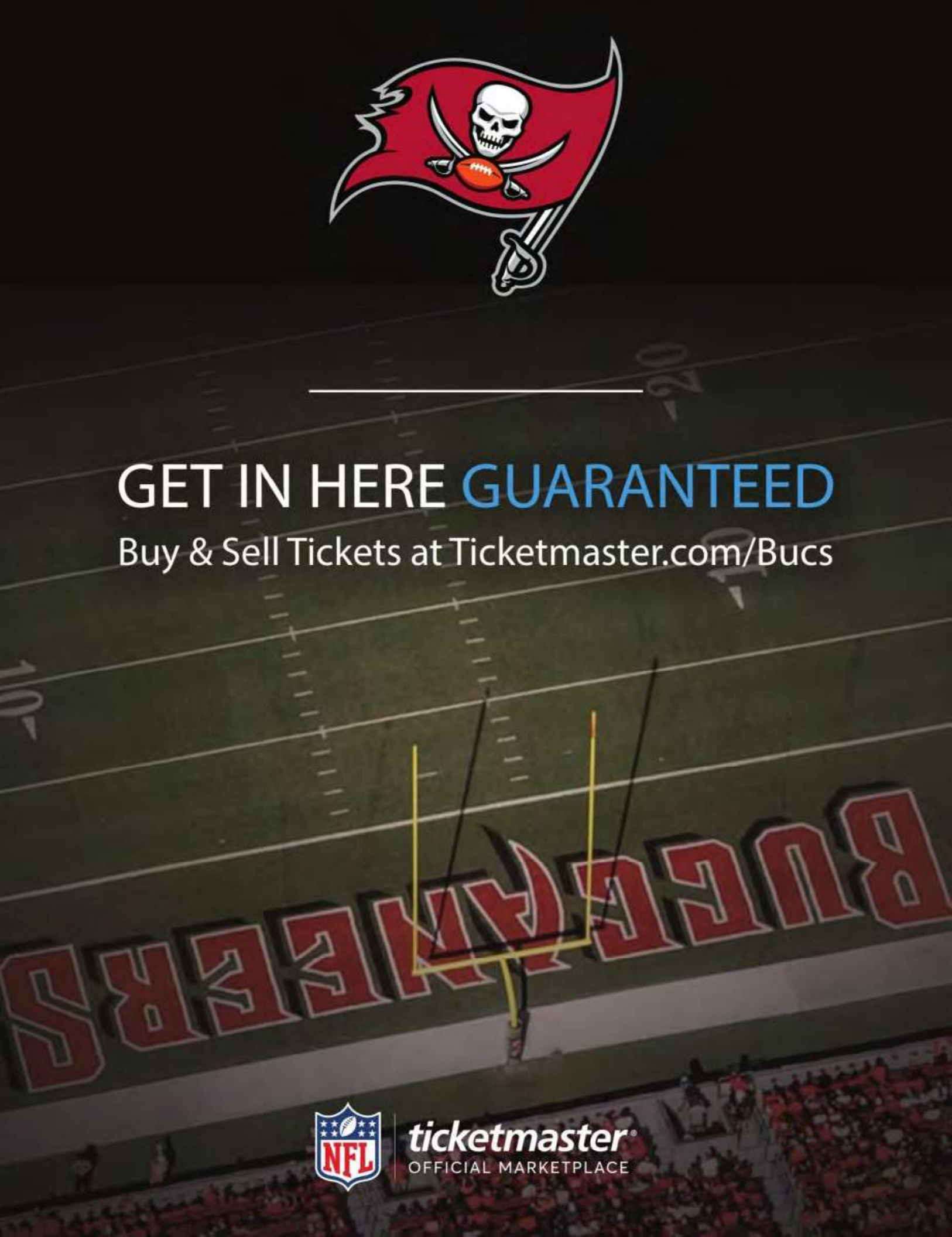
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87
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TIGHT END
HEIGHT: 6-5 • WEIGHT: 255 • NFL EXPERIENCE: R • COLLEGE: Purdue • HOMETOWN: Suwanee, GA

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ROUND
6
BUCCANEERS
32
32
JOSH
HAYES
DEFENSIVE BACK
HEIGHT: 6-0 • WEIGHT: 190 • NFL EXPERIENCE: R • COLLEGE: Kansas State • HOMETOWN: Lakeland, FL

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ROUND
6

10

TREY PALMER

WIDE RECEIVER

HEIGHT: 6-1 • **WEIGHT:** 190 • **NFL EXPERIENCE:** R • **COLLEGE:** Nebraska • **HOMETOWN:** Kentwood, LA

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Here at the Buccaneers, we strongly believe football is a game for everyone - those who love to play, coach, and watch. To deliver on this belief, we work directly with local teachers, school administrators, physical education instructors, and coaches to grow the game and the fan base. With the partnership of Tampa Bay community leaders, the Buccaneers provide health and fitness programs, a football development curriculum and equipment, and overall inspiration to enhance student education and overall wellness.

FOOTBALL FOR IMPACT

The Buccaneers recognize the power of our platform to drive positive and sustainable change for the greater Tampa Bay community. This is why we are committed to designing impactful programs with the community to address areas of disparity and opportunity. As a result, the Buccaneers launched the Social Justice Initiative in 2018, with the Glazer family dedicating $1,000,000 to fund player-led initiatives. The team is also at the forefront of all gender equality efforts, including establishing a first-of-its-kind flag football tournament, scholarships for girls in football and career summits.

JR. BUCS

Sign your child up for the Jr. Bucs Fan Club to score a free backpack filled with Bucs treasure.

Scan the code to join for a one-time $24.99 fee and receive:*

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- Jr. Bucs Lanyard
- Official Jr. Bucs Membership Card
- Priority Invitations to Exclusive Events
- Jr. Bucs Newsletter Emails

*Plus $5 shipping and handling. Does not ship internationally.

FOOTBALL SALUTES

The Buccaneers celebrate military heroes who proudly serve our country and community. Throughout the year, the team collaborates with the MacDill Air Force base and various community partners to plan memorable gameday experiences and exclusive events in their honor. Efforts include the Hero of the Game, a Salute to Service Suite, the Schwarzkopf Military Family of the Year Awards, Military Day at Training Camp, and more.

TREASURE CHESTS

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GLAZER VISION FOUNDATION

For over a decade, the Glazer Vision Foundation has been committed to fulltreatment vision correction for underserved children by providing more than 200,000 free eye screenings and over 20,000 free pairs of prescription glasses.

Help create awareness while supporting children in need! Simply share a photo or selfie wearing glasses (or using the @glazervisionfdn Instagram filter), and post on social media tagging @glazervisionfdn and #OneShareOnePair and the Glazer Vision Foundation will provide a child with a free eye exam and glasses.

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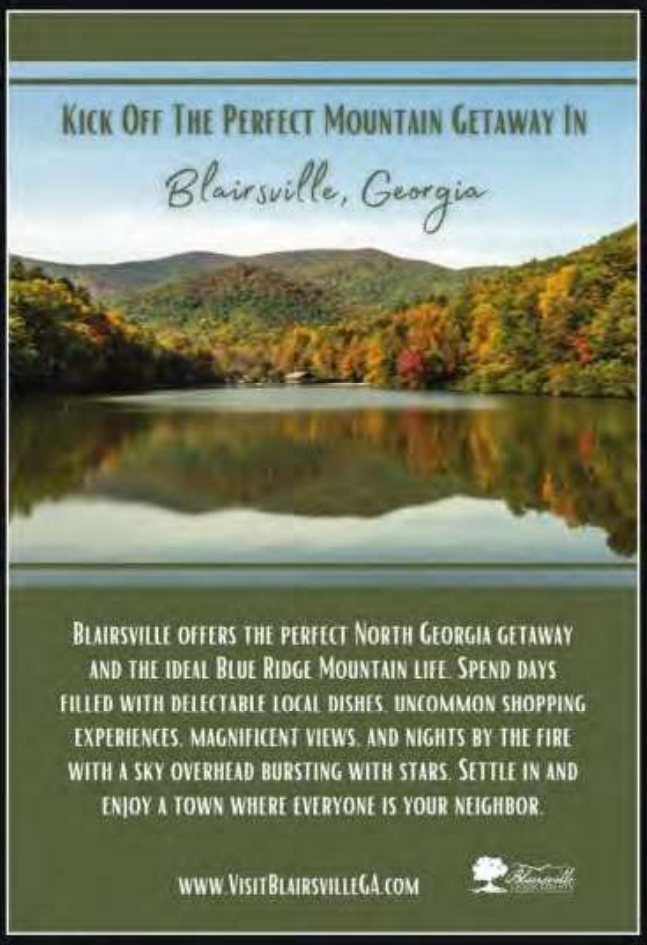
2023 TAMPA BAY CHEERLEADERS

Since 1976, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Cheerleaders have served as ambassadors for one of the most distinguished franchises in the NFL, captivating Tampa Bay's avid fans, performing to worldwide acclaim, and cheering on the team to two Super Bowl titles.

The 28 athletes that comprise the dynamic squad are chosen from hundreds of candidates each year. On top of being talented performers, Buccaneers Cheerleaders represent a variety of professional fields including education, healthcare, real estate, dance, public policy and more. They are committed to supporting the Buccaneers on game days at Raymond James Stadium and at community events and corporate appearances throughout the year.

In addition to their work in the West Central Florida region, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Cheerleaders serve as ambassadors for the organization all over the United States and beyond, traveling to locations in Asia, Europe, and Australia to entertain and connect with the best fans in the NFL.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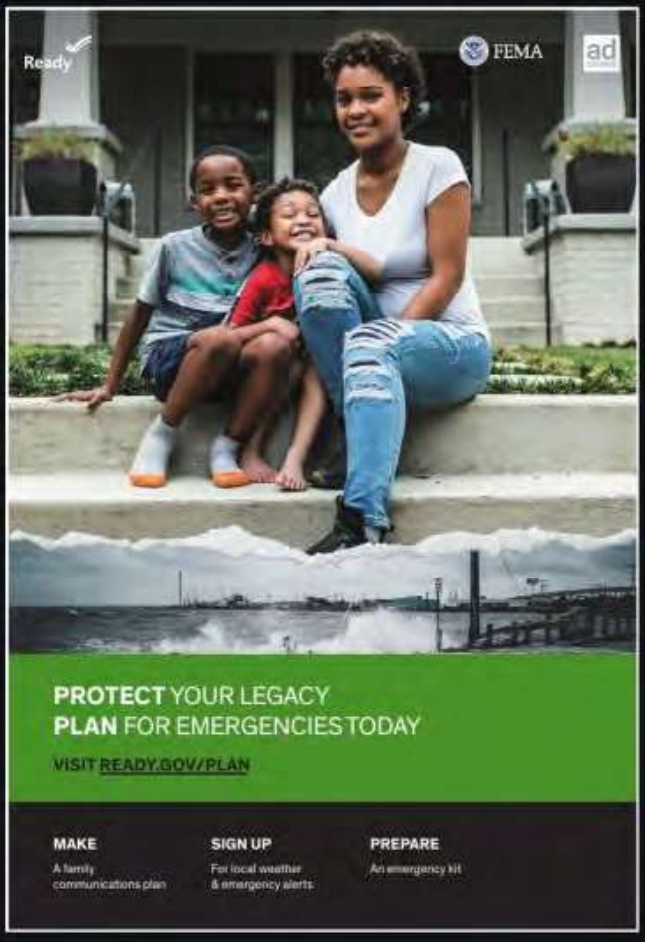
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